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THE PREACHER

THE PREACHER

HIS PERSON, MESSAGE, AND METHOD

A BOOK FOR THE CLASS-ROOM
AND STUDY

BY

ARTHUR S. HOYT

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In reverent and grateful memory of the *Mother*, whose life made possible and desirable the work of the preacher; and of the *Wife*, whose love and taste ever kept from low content.

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PREFACE

No apology is needed in publishing a new book on preaching. As long as the pulpit shall stand as the chief teacher of the religious life, young men will need to be taught how to receive and give the Word of God, and older men will welcome whatever promises to brighten their ideal and to renew their creative impulse. The only question is the worth of the book: does it meet the need of the present-day pulpit? Will it help men to a message, divine in its experience and in its fitness to living issues?

In the changed atmosphere of modern life, it is not enough for the preacher to say the things that are expected; he must speak the truth that has found him and so will find other men; and therefore the lectures place emphasis upon the personal element in preaching. They attempt to portray the preacher as he ought to be in character and habit, and to uncover the sources of his real authority.

Over against a sensational pulpit, with its worldly standards of immediate and tabulated results, is placed a spiritual service tested by spiritual measures and motives. Above the

superficial sway of eloquence is exalted an instructive pulpit that comes from the growing knowledge of the Gospel and of life, and results in a stable, balanced, and comprehensive Christianity.

If the social consciousness of the age is to develop a finer sense of individuality and so a nobler responsibility, the preacher must present a Gospel that shall arouse and train the conscience, and inspire and direct the new social forces that are trying to realize the Kingdom of God on earth.

To help the preacher speak with authority, touch the conscience and form the moral habits of the age, and make his work educative of the abundant life is the purpose of the book. It is sent forth with the earnest desire that something of this large measure may be attained.

ARTHUR S. HOYT.

NOVEMBER 26, 1908.

CONTENTS

PART I

THE PERSON

CHAPTER		PAGE
I.	The Personality of the Preacher	1
II.	The Enrichment of Personality	21
III.	The Physical Life of the Preacher	39
IV.	The Intellectual Life of the Preacher	63
V.	The Intellectual Method of the Preacher	87
VI.	The Spiritual Life of the Preacher	111
VII.	The Method of the Spiritual Life	135

PART II

THE MESSAGE

VIII.	The Authority of the Message	163
IX.	A Living Message	189
X.	The Aim of the Message	207
XI.	The Contents of the Message	221
XII.	The Social Message	237

PART III

THE METHOD

CHAPTER		PAGE
XIII.	Evangelistic Preaching	259
XIV.	Expository Preaching	279
XV.	Doctrinal Preaching	305
XVI.	Ethical Sermons	325
XVII.	The Ethics of Pulpit Speech . .	349

PART I

THE PERSON

"The Christian ministry is the largest field for the growth of a human soul that this world offers. In it he who is faithful must go on learning more and more forever.

* * * * * *

"It is a continual climbing which opens continually wider prospects. It repeats the experience of Christ's disciples, of whom their Lord was always making larger men and then giving them the larger truth of which their enlarged natures had become capable."

— PHILLIPS BROOKS.

I

THE PERSONALITY OF THE PREACHER

OUTLINE

Personality in all work.

Personality has special value in Preaching.

The personal quality of thought, style, and speech.

Here a reason for the perpetuity of preaching.

The power of example in speech.

Personality has a peculiar importance in Preaching from the Nature of the Gospel.

Truth is incarnate. Personality is used by Christ in extending His Kingdom.

The New Testament words for ministry are messenger and witness.

The secret of the Preacher is the secret of life.

The truth emphasized by Christ's training of the disciples.

The History of Preaching shows the importance of the Personality of the Preacher.

The Personal Qualities that make the Preacher.

The moral and spiritual qualities first: sincere faith, moral earnestness, human sympathy, courage, and hopefulness.

Intellectual and physical gifts.

The Sense of Vocation and its effect upon the Life of the Preacher.

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I

THE PERSONALITY OF THE PREACHER

The person of the preacher is the life of the sermon. "A true sermon is a real deed. It puts the preacher's personality into an act." True preaching is not only the expression of life, but in the final analysis can be no better than the life. The man can never be separated from his speech.

In this respect the preacher, though he is pre-eminent, does not stand alone. The person counts in every work. Work is life, and the value of the work depends upon the amount of life put into it. The chief value in any effort is the effect upon the worker. All our efforts are a few things in God's sight, and His approval depends upon the quality of the work, the thought and conscience and purpose put into it. God always has more regard for the worker than the work.

The true outcome of the work, then, is life, because it is life that goes into it. The personal quality of the work gives it distinction and

power, whether it be the building of a house, the writing of a book, or the teaching of a child.

While the worker counts chiefly in all work, it is easy to see that in *preaching* the personality *has special value.*

The secret and charm of all public speech is in the speaker. It lies beyond analysis, in the mystery of personality. Both what he says and how he says it have his peculiar flavor. All genuine speech is personal. It cannot be an imitation — the echo of a voice; it must be the man himself who speaks. The thought is his thought, truth that has flashed upon his soul, that has sounded the depths of his nature, that has been inspiring or subduing vision, a conviction, bending his whole nature to allegiance, a passion constraining all the forces of life to its advocacy. Every message has the personal quality that Paul puts into "My Gospel." The personal must be the channel of the spiritual and the moral. It is so in Christ; it must be so in every teacher of Christ.

It is a long-accepted axiom of rhetoric that the "style is the man." Something goes into it that cannot be included or defined by the laws of writing: the subtle infusion of life, some word or image that mirrors the soul; some relation of ideas that reveals the simple, inevitable truth, as in the case of John Henry New-

man; or conveys the sense of the mystery and infinitude of life, as in some of the writing of Frederick W. Robertson; the sharp definition or suggestive image of a Parkhurst; the simple yet exhaustless flow of a Brooks; the great vista, beyond the accurate knowledge, of a Bushnell.

And still more evidently the *speaking* conveys the personality. The form, the face, the voice, the manner, — even without marked peculiarities, — convey the qualities of the man. They are not the mask, but the channels for the impartation of life. There is more than the physical quality to the voice. Its sounds are pulses of the soul. The word must be spoken to give its utmost meaning and reach its largest power. The spoken word has more of life than the written word, — and when the voice ceases, something of the charm and power are gone. Great orators that have swayed multitudes by the "Golden Mouth" or "Silver Tongue" do not justify their name in the printed page. "That voice would strangely stir my heart, though I could not understand a word he said," was the remark of a keen critic upon a speaker of magnetic personality.

Here is a reason for the *perpetuity of preaching*. Public speech may change its form and at times lose something of its proportion, but it can never change its mission or lose its power.

The printed page may be a larger educator, but it can never displace the pulpit. While men in assemblies are peculiarly receptive and responsive to influence, while the personal element is necessary to make truth clear and persuasive, and while the person finds its completest expression through the living voice, the pulpit will remain, what it has always been, the chief spiritual instructor and inspirer of men.

There is a still deeper truth in the relation of personality to speech. In speaking there is the subtle influence of example. Paul constantly appealed to the witness of his life. The example of singleness and sacrifice wings the message of truth. The man must be back of his truth. He must live the truth, or give the impression that he lives it, if his speech is to have any worth. The finest speech — men will have none of it at last if the life does not ring true to the word. "What you do speaks so loud that I cannot hear what you say," is the oft-quoted wisdom of Emerson.

The *nature of the Gospel* gives to personality a peculiar importance in preaching. The Gospel is an Incarnation. "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth." Truth is not an abstraction, it is concrete and personal. There is

no moral and spiritual truth apart from a person. Christ is the truth. Redemption is "not a truth, nor an ideal, not an institution, with their external and æsthetic effect, but it is a personal act, the external act of an external person, with all the moral effect due to that." [1]

The study of truth in the Gospel of John brings out the vital, inseparable relation of truth and personality. The word *truth* is peculiar to John, and is the form by which he conveys the strongest impression of the life of Christ. Nicodemus talks with Christ about truth. But Christ at once turns the thought to life, — the life from above that has vision and approval. Truth then is not a mere fact of knowledge, a conclusion of reason, but something that must be done, a principle and practice of the life. Again Christ speaks of the freedom of the truth that comes from loving fellowship with Him. Truth is but idle words unless it becomes a conviction and a practice, unless it is a living, renewing, freeing power.

And the idea of truth gets its final and fullest statement in the prayer with which Christ lays bare his life and work to the Father. He prays for his disciples, "Sanctify them in the truth: Thy word is truth. As Thou didst send Me

[1] Forsyth, "Positive Preaching and Modern Mind," p. 65.

into the world, even so send I them into the world, and for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they themselves also may be sanctified in truth." The word of God is a life, and the life is to make men to live as the Sons of God. "We know," says Bishop Brooks, "that truth cannot mean in Him merely objective verity, it must have in it the elements of character, since the leading of man into it by the Divine Son is to be the perfection of man's life. It is His own character through which alone truth can come to make character in His disciples."

Christ's method of extending the Kingdom is the *personal method*. The two words in the New Testament for the ministry are *witness* and *messenger*. The preacher is a sent man, with a message to give which none but he can give. Nothing is clearer in the teaching of Christ and the testimony of the Early Church. "As ye go, preach, saying, 'the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand.'"[1] The solemn and emphatic charge as Christ leaves the little company — His last words are "to preach the Gospel" and "make disciples of all nations."

The men whom Christ chose and sent recognized that preaching was their chief work and that they had a distinct message which had been given them by their Master. They use for the

[1] Matt. x. 7.

most part echoes and reminiscences of Christ's own words. The Acts and the Epistles are unmistakable as to their view of their work. Soon after Pentecost they asked for the appointment of deacons in order to be free to devote themselves to what they considered their proper work,—"the ministry of the word and prayer."[1]

To the elders of Ephesus, Paul describes his work as declaring, teaching, testifying: "I hold not my life of any account, as dear unto myself, so that I may accomplish my course, and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus to testify the Gospel of the grace of God."[2]

The Epistles are full of the same thought. In Romans, Paul speaks of himself "as separated unto the Gospel of God."[3] In First Corinthians ministers are "stewards of the mysteries of God."[4] In Second Corinthians, Paul speaks of himself as "an ambassador of Christ, intrusted with the ministry of reconciliation, and beseeching men in Christ's stead to be reconciled to God."[5] In Timothy and Titus, he is a preacher and a herald. And Paul's impression of his chief work seems no more distinct and binding than that of the other apostles. Evangelist, prophet, teacher, are the great words of calling in the New Testament. All the leaders of the early

[1] Acts vi. 2–4. [2] Acts xx. 24. [3] Rom. i. 1–5.
[4] 1 Cor. iv. 1. [5] 2 Cor. v. 18–20.

church had this sense of calling, this conviction of message, and handed it down unimpaired to their successors.

But the other word — *witness* — is even of prior importance. The message of the Apostles was what they had seen and heard, — what they had experienced of the grace of God. They were to be witnesses, speaking of their knowledge gained by personal association with Christ, and by the light thrown on that knowledge by the Holy Spirit. "When the Comforter is come, He shall bear witness of me, and ye also bear witness."[1] The disciple is sent as Christ was sent. "In Him was life, and the life was the light of men." "Ye are the light of the world." Life is always first. Light is simply the outcome of life. Until men know the truth, experience its power; until truth becomes assimilated, transmuted into life, men cannot become the effective messengers of truth. "He charged them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father." "Ye shall receive power when the Holy Ghost is come upon you; and ye shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."[2] Witness and messenger are one and inseparable in the work of the preacher. Truth spreads as life

[1] John xv. 26. [2] Acts i. 8.

spreads. The law for the increase of the Kingdom is the personal touch of a vitalized person.

The secret of the preacher is the secret of life, — the abundant life. There are natural gifts of social contact and public teaching that are serviceable to the ministry, and these are to be trained to the highest efficiency; but these are the channels, the means, not the source or elements of power. The real problem of preaching is the problem of the spiritual life. The great question for us is to be and not to do; to be and keep ourselves and grow in vital personal relation to Jesus Christ. We cannot doubt this as we consider our Lord's training of the disciples. His personal discourses, the profounder ones, are about the inner life. Think how He dwells upon it at the last supper! They must abide in Him, if they are to do anything for Him; the fruit that glorifies the Father is of the Spirit — the graces of character. God's plan of establishing His Kingdom is by inspired men, — the same now as in the age of the apostles; "God possessed men," as was said of Maurice.

The *history of preaching* shows the importance of the personality of the preacher.

The progress of Christianity is traced by the names of notable men who have proclaimed its truths, prophetic personalities who dominated

the thought and life of their age. They spoke so that men were roused from a low, conventional religion and heard the voice of God as at first. It was the great mind and heart, — the sensitive, fearless soul that caught and expressed the larger vision of God and His Christ. It was the man that spoke and the man that made the truth effective. The message has passed into the heritage of the church, but the name is still a watchword and inspiration to men.

> "They are the dead but sceptred kings
> That rule as from their urns."

The average pulpit has been quickened by these inspiring personalities, enriched by even the unconscious influence of noble lives. There has been an unfailing supply of spiritual leadership and instruction. Whatever wrongs the church as an organization may have committed, whatever admixture of selfish and worldly elements has entered into the life of the ministry, we can say that God has spoken through the pulpit more than anywhere else in the world. And though all the teachings of the ministry have not been the mind of Christ, in every age the essential truth has been spoken and followed. In spite of the failures of mistaken men, or the sins of hirelings, the world has been nobly served. It could be wished that the choicest

sons would ever choose this hardest and highest work, that all the servants of the church were more richly endowed with natural and spiritual gifts. But the line of noble men from Christ to our own day has never been broken. "It is an unbroken succession, not by the ordinations of men, nor by the will of men, but by the power of the Holy Spirit. It is a holy fellowship, a glorious association. It has had its spots. All have been men of like passions with us. Some entered the ministry without a divine call; others have been overborne by passion. Some concerning the faith have made shipwreck. Peter denied his Master and Judas betrayed Him. Men have disgraced themselves and brought reproach upon the office; but it still lives and strengthens, because Christ lives with it, and has determined that it shall stand. 'He walks among the candlesticks and holds the stars in his right hand.'" [1] It may be truly said that the preacher's life is the life of his preaching.

Such being the vital relation of personality to preaching, the question is inevitable as to the kind of personality for the preacher. What are the *personal elements* that go to make the preacher?

The *moral* and *spiritual qualities* of the man are first. With these great gifts men of humble minds and insignificant presence have been

[1] Bishop Simpson, "Lectures on Preaching," p. 36.

greatly blessed, and without them the most splendid natural endowment has been but a broken reed.

The preacher to-day must have a *sincere faith*. "I believe, therefore I speak" has always been the law of preaching. It has never been more needful than in our age, — the questioning, groping, stumbling age, that says with so many pathetic voices: "We have lost the way. Show us the Father and it sufficeth us."

The preacher has no reason to speak unless he has found some truth precious and is willing to stake his life upon it. Guesses at truth are powerless, and so is an absolute, transcendent creed that has no humanity in it. It is not a question of how much a man believes but how completely. The preacher needs a personal trust that means the absolute committal of his life. This is the moral element of faith inseparable from sincerity. Mr. Gilder has expressed it in strong verse:

> "If Jesus Christ is a man —
> And only a man — I say
> That of all mankind I cleave to Him,
> And to Him will I cleave alway.
>
> "If Jesus Christ is a God —
> And the only God — I swear
> I will follow Him thro' heaven and hell,
> The earth, the sea, and the air."

The preacher needs a fine *ethical sense*, a *moral earnestness* that applies the truth to his own life and makes the man a missionary of truth.

There is an inseparable relation between a sensitive conscience and a clear vision. Paul's open vision and masterful conviction were connected with his moral nature. He ever strove to have a conscience void of offence towards God and man, and so there was no moral blindness that obscured and perverted the conclusions of the intellect. He looked upon the Christ with "unveiled face." In spiritual things the knowing is subtly connected with willing. "Obedience is the organ of spiritual knowledge." We must grow into many things. We know as we do and we know that we may enter into larger life.

Moral earnestness is not only the condition of knowledge, but the basis of purpose and sustained enthusiasm to reach men. Possessed and controlled by the truth, the earnest soul cannot keep it in silence. To be right oneself is not enough. The heart is stirred at sight of the world given over to the worship of error. Truth is expansive and conquering. It must be expressed in service for men. It makes men witnesses, living epistles, advocates, missionaries.

"The noble hart, that harbours vertuous thought,
And is with child of glorious great intent,
Can never rest, untill it forth have brought
The eternall brood of glorie excellent."
— "Faerie Queene."

A *sympathetic nature* should be the gift of the preacher; a power to feel with men and touch the cords of the human heart. He should count life the most interesting thing in the world and be able to love the individual man and not be governed by the vague sentiment of humanity. To enter into the experiences of another life, to read noble possibilities behind rough faces and hard conditions, gives to preaching that humanity which is its most attractive and persuasive quality. "The divinity of a sermon is in proportion to its humanity." Such a preacher interprets life and opens the heart and presents the Gospel as the divine complement to human need. "The more perfectly the knowing faculty and the loving faculty meet in any man, the more that man's life will become a transmitter and interpreter of truth to other men."

The preacher needs to be a *brave man* who can face men and danger unflinchingly; whose faculties are quickened by the critical nature of opportunity; who loves men too truly ever to be afraid of them. Such a man is bent on

mastery. He faces men with sublime indifference to their opinion, and yet never so sensitive to it. The very difficulties of public speech compel the discipline that conquers and call forth the qualities of leadership. He speaks the truth in love, but he speaks the truth at any cost. He is able to espouse an unpopular but righteous cause. Courage is the superb asset of the preacher. Without it men will not long respect his word.

And *hopefulness* must cast its light over the preacher's word. It must be something more than a bright and happy spirit that refuses to see the shadows. It must be born of a faith that fully faces the disturbing facts of life and holds fast to the eternal wisdom and goodness — who believes that "the all-great is the all-loving too." An unconquerable optimism is the spirit that wins and helps men; a spirit that never complains or despairs, — that lives in the light of the coming victory. The preacher is to put heart into men; into men baffled and beaten by evil circumstances and the evil self, the hope of renewed and triumphant manhood. The man who never doubts that clouds will break has the power of inspiration and leadership.

There are *intellectual* and *physical* gifts that go to make the preacher. The best powers of

mind are required to perceive and express spiritual truth. Especially is there the call for the power of clear reasoning and the gift of imagination; the power that is able to sift the true from the false, and present the evidence in convincing form; the faculty that perceives beyond the common horizon and is fired by the vision, and is able to portray to other minds, set forth in something like tangible form, the creative and pictorial power of imagination.

Not unimportant are the *physical gifts* of strong and sound body, and the speaking voice able to express the most subtle shades of thought and feeling and lay hold of the inmost self.

Natural gifts are great helps, but they do not make the preacher. The spiritual and intellectual have often triumphed over the physical. A great message and a great purpose have often made common men instruments of power.

It is a mistake to convey the impression that only peculiar natures are called to the prophetic office. There has been too much of the sign-seeking spirit in considering the call to the pulpit. It may be said of some men as it was said of Pascal, "There are decisive hours in which a man feels the germ of a new vocation bursting forth in him: a world all at once opens to his mind; and seized with a passion imperious as the very voice of God, he takes upon his

conscience the engagement to pursue the work, which is henceforth to be the end of his life."

A man may feel grateful if he have such an imperious passion moving him into the ministry. But let him not be distrustful and wavering, only the more humble and faithful, if his feelings be less masterful and his conviction less sure.

The pulpit of our time needs a lofty ideal and heart-searching. Men need sooner or later a profound assurance that they are God's chosen servants and that God is speaking through them. Nothing less than this will keep a man in spring and joy and hope amid the trying necessities, the strenuous labors, and the deferred hopes of the years. And the man who has the capacity for the pulpit, and by his devotion to the highest things makes full proof of his ministry, will not be long without the inspirations, the heavenly sanctions, of his calling.

"The times need strong, earnest men who believe. Such men can win a hearing: multitudes are waiting to hear them speak. But the times are critical times, and mere pretension or incapacity stands out confessed and condemned as never before." — Rainsford.

II

THE ENRICHMENT OF PERSONALITY

OUTLINE

The Individuality of Men.

The blessing to the pulpit of diversity of gifts. The difference in effectiveness is in personality.

The Limitation of the Individual Life.

The lesson of experience. Men called to differing service in the pulpit. The true judgment of such service. Each man must be true to himself. The false conception of spiritual power.

The Nature of Personality.

The deepest and fullest self. Not fixed and unchanging. The resultant of what we have received and done. So personality can be enriched. Implied in Christian faith.

Personality should be enriched in Spiritual Wisdom.

Religious truth the sphere of the preacher. Not academic, but truth in life. Spiritual wisdom.

Personality should be enriched in Human Sympathy.

Lack of humanity the vice of professionalism.

Natural barriers to be overcome.

Increased sympathy and increased power of ministry. The highest influence connected with breadth of interests.

The Conditions of Growth.

Hunger for a larger life. Openness of mind.

Fidelity to the daily task. Fellowship with Christ.

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II

THE ENRICHMENT OF PERSONALITY

The art of living is the greatest of all arts. And because living is not large and noble, with wide interests and high thoughts, the influence of the pulpit, however devoted, may be narrow and feeble. A young preacher, sensitive and aspiring, shrinking from nothing that would make his ministry more effective, in comparing two classes of men in the ministry, — one impressive, the other tiresome, one dealing in vital realities, the other lacking the human touch, — asks the question: "Does all this come back to the idea of personality? And if it does, and if we stop there with the answer, is it not rather discouraging to the average man? especially if we assume — as is so often done — that personality is something that a man is born with and cannot help, and must get along with the best he can. Is there no road by which we can go a little farther back and discover, that though all may not be equally effective or impressive as speakers, still there is possibility for almost limitless growth?"

The first thing to notice is the *individuality* of men. There are various gifts in the church. The diversity of gifts is one of the distinctions and blessings of the modern pulpit, as of the Apostolic church.

Men are not run through the same mould, but have freedom to develop and express their peculiar natures. Modern individualism has its sins against the historic unity of the faith, against the social body of the church, but it has contributed much to the moral life of men and to the variety and comprehensiveness of the pulpit. The difference between men, in their attractiveness and effectiveness, is in personality.

In personality is *the limitation* of the individual life. A man cannot know all things and he cannot do all things. The first impression of life is its boundlessness. But physical weariness and mental and spiritual struggle bring the wiser mind. The strongest impression of the years is that they bring to each life certain definite limits. The young Melanchthon needs but tell the story of salvation to win men, but the soberer Melanchthon knows that the old Adam is too much for the young Melanchthon. The pathos of life is the disproportion between the promise and the reality. The vision of the brain so far outruns the path of the feet! To

accept the fact of limited powers, to have a wise estimate of self, — and yet never to brook the continuance of weak-mindedness, still to be striving for the bright reward, though the world be adverse to desert, — this is to have the triumph of the Spirit.

It must be understood that men are called to differing service in the pulpit. To judge all men by the same standards is sheerest folly. One man is an educator, and line upon line patiently instructs the people in the essential truth of the Gospel. Another man has the power of bringing knowledge to action. One man has the power to interpret truth. Another man reads the heart and makes its chords to vibrate. It is a wise providence over the church that two men of similar gifts are rarely in succession in the same pulpit, — that the church may have a more symmetrical development.

We cannot tell which type of preacher may do the more important service, which really advances the Kingdom of God. The numerical estimates of a preacher's success, so common to-day, are largely futile, — the short-sighted vision of a materialistic spirit. Does a great congregation throng the church? Then the preacher is called great. Are many added to the church roll? Then the preacher is successful; he has the true Gospel message. Such standards

are a subtle and fatal materialism that make men restless, and superficial, and unreal. Many a man has lost his finer ideal, dulled his conscience, and failed of the preacher he ought to have been, that he might score a success on the treasurer's books and the yearly report of his church. The quiet, country minister who trained an Alexander Duff into the faith and purpose of a missionary may have done more for the Kingdom of God than many a man who has had thousands hanging on his word. We need a spiritual vision of work as well as of the truth.

Every man must see his own truth and do his own work, be true to himself and to the pattern in the mount. No man can live in comparisons and try to be another without making a sorry failure of it.

There is a false teaching of a limitless supernatural power at the command of any man willing to be used. If we set out our empty vessels, the Lord will fill them for His use. But the wonder is not in making a new vessel, but in keeping it full of the spirit of life. No absolute surrender to God's will, no complete emptying of self, will make John Smith into a Moody or Spurgeon or Phillips Brooks. The Spirit of God never violates a man's nature. He makes a better man and a larger man. He

is the great empowering force of life; but His working is not to be distinguished from a man's own spirit, and His most perfect working is in completest harmony with a man's best self. An unscriptural and irrational pietism may awaken expectations that are doomed to disappointment, and divert men from the happy and helpful use of personality.

But what is *personality?* It is an unfathomed mystery, but some things are clear. It is a man's deepest and fullest self; that which connects a man with humanity, yet separates him from every other member of it, — the fountain from which his life flows, the force by which his work is done.

But a man's personality is not a fixed and unchanging element. At any moment it is the resultant of what he has received and done. Take such an example as the late Bishop Phillips Brooks, perhaps the richest personality in the history of the modern pulpit, the strongest teacher of the fact that preaching is truth through personality. He received his inheritance through generations of the best life of New England: on the one side the Brookses, men of large affairs and practical wisdom; and on the other the Phillipses, men of spiritual vision and devotion. He was trained by a group of notable teachers, and at a time great with interest over

critical problems of thought and life. His achievement was familiarity with world-thought and identification with the widest interests of men. He had a life of growing thought, humanity, and service. Who can say whether he received most or gained most? His personality was a mysterious gift, — the five talents, but he certainly gained other five talents.

Life is not a house in which we gather and store apart from ourselves. It is a growth: all we do transformed into what we are. Man has the power of an endless growth.

And this brings us to the heart of the question as to the use of personality. There is a way that the preacher can make the most of himself. There is such a thing as the enrichment of personality.

Christian faith implies the growth of personality. Christianity is God's way of making a man, the largest and best possible man. It is a poor excuse to plead our nature for any defect that may be remedied, any weakness that may be outgrown. We believe in the power to make new creatures. The Gospel is full of commands and inspirations to growth. Our duty is always ahead of us, not measured by what we are, but by what we may become by the spirit of obedience. It is a sin to be a dwarf when a man might be a giant.

In what way shall we enrich our personality? In what way shall the preacher try to grow?

The preacher should aim to grow especially in *spiritual wisdom* and in *human sympathy.*

Christ's prayer for the disciples is to be the preacher's desire and standard. "Sanctify them in the truth." He is to feel himself a dedicated spirit, set apart in the truth. The word of redemption is to be his realm of pursuit, of appropriation, of expression. What nature is to the scientist — and more — religious truth is to be to the preacher. He is to live in it and for it. To be the increasing master of the great subjects of religion is to be his ambition, his consecrated purpose. He is a teacher and so should know these things. He stands as an expert in the Gospel of redemption, and his word will have authority as the people believe in the sincerity and thoroughness of his knowledge. Preaching is not a question of popular eloquence, — many a false prophet has had a precocious gift of speech, and many a demagogue has captured an audience, — it is a question of having a word of God.

For deep in the heart of the age is the religious question, which no other interest, however absorbing, can wholly eradicate or suppress. It comes out in most unexpected ways and places. It is the motive of many a

modern story. It comes out in the social circle and speaks in the discussion of public interests. Is there a purpose of good controlling the forces of nature and of human life; is "the all-great the all-loving too"; is sin misfortune or guilt, to be forgotten or to be forgiven; can a broken life be renewed; is there an immortal life? The man who can throw light upon these questions, who can speak with authority upon them, is the spiritual teacher of men, the messenger of God to them.

This knowledge must not be academic. The pursuit of truth for its own sake is a noble ideal, but it must always be remembered that religious truth differs from scientific in this: that it is inseparable from life; it can be known and expressed only in life. The subtlest powers of spiritual perception are not in the intellect, but in the heart and conscience. One simple heart cry of human need — "What shall I do?" — may penetrate farther into the mystery of Godliness than the profoundest reason. The things of the Spirit are spiritually discerned. The promise is that when the heart turns to the Lord, the veil shall be removed.

Every realm of knowledge has its own conditions for entrance, the key that unlocks its treasures. And a pure heart, the single eye that chooses and serves the Kingdom of God as

the supreme good, is the unalterable law of spiritual knowledge. We are to welcome every light upon the history of the Gospel, test the facts of redemption by every proper analysis; but remember that the life that we bring to this examination and what we are willing to do with the results must also enter into any final and truthful conclusion. No question of religion then can be purely academic. It is important for the preacher to know what the universities are doing, but quite as important to know what the servants of Christ are doing in the heart of dense cities or of dark continents, and what the Gospel can do to transform and develop human life.

> "Let knowledge grow from more to more,
> But more of reverence in us dwell;
> That mind and soul according well,
> May make one music as before,
> But vaster."

If the personality of the preacher is to be enriched, knowledge must be transformed by experience into *spiritual wisdom.* It must help the preacher to live and so help others to live. The growth must be in "the knowledge and the grace of Christ," — one and inseparable. The outcome must be a gracious life, a witness of the power of truth and so a messenger, a transmitter of the power of truth to other lives.

And the preacher's personality should be enriched in *human sympathy*. Growth in spiritual wisdom implies growth in love, in the purpose of good to other lives. With the vision of truth must be a growing sense of the worth of man, not a vague enthusiasm for humanity, but a growing interest in the individual and particular man. It is easy to make an idolatry of books and ideas and forget and deny the ties of humanity. The man cannot grow if the heart shrivels. We may have all knowledge, yet without love we are nothing. The vice of professionalism is its lack of genuine humanity, failure to put oneself in the place of the other man and so interpret and minister to life. The best growth of the preacher is in human-heartedness.

On every side there are natural and artificial barriers to be overcome. The preacher often finds himself in a world indifferent or hostile to him and to his message. Social pride ignores him as an important factor in life. Selfishness, that fears that its gains or pleasures may be checked by his message, turns its back. Men of thought and men of affairs may relegate him to a minor place in the life of the world. There are men that are antipathetic and forces that oppose. Many a minister finds himself in an ever narrowing world of interests and sympathies. Instead of a larger humanity and a

larger world of relations and influence, he finds himself the victim of his own tastes, limited by his likes and dislikes, shut in by the hard lines of his own failures in great-heartedness. The preacher grows through a great purpose to be a brother man. So-called intellectual privilege may be simply a restriction upon manhood. There can be no gain through intellectual exclusiveness. Separation from men may make the mind itself a point of dull stagnation.

"I used to think," writes Hawthorne, "I could imagine all passions, all feelings, and states of the heart and mind, but how little did I know! Indeed, we are but shadows; we are not endowed with real life; and all that seems most real about us is but the thinnest substance of a dream, — till the heart be touched. That touch creates us — then we begin to be — thereby we are beings of reality, and inheritors of eternity." [1]

The enrichment of life through human sympathies means increasing power to help. The preacher loves men better, knows men better, serves men better. The larger the life, the more many-sided, the more the ways by which God's voice may be heard and that message transmitted to other lives.

"If one cares to exert the highest influence, —

[1] Woodberry, "Hawthorne," p. 89.

not merely to dominate another's choices, — he must seek such an influence as the other shall be able to recognize as simply the demand of his own sanest and best self. That influence is possible only to the man who has sufficient breadth of interests to enter into another's life with understanding, respect, and sympathy." [1]

There are tides in the life of a man. Some powers will necessarily decline. But the heart need never dry up. It should be a perennial fountain of sweet waters. One cannot measure the possible growth in spiritual life and influence.

"The best is yet to be,
The last of life, for which the first was made."

To be a great-heart, full of tenderness and compassion, to speak out of a genuine interest and fellow-feeling, helps one to stand in Christ's place and give his pleading, beseeching, reconciling word.

Such a preacher is beautifully described by Jean Ingelow in "Brothers and a Sermon":

"I have heard many speak, but this one man —
So anxious not to go to heaven alone —
This one man I remember, and his look,
'Till twilight overshadowed him. He ceased,
And out in darkness with the fisherfolk
We passed and stumbled over mounds of moss,

[1] King, "Rational Living," p. 11.

And heard, but did not see the passing beck.
Oh, graceless heart, would that it could regain
From the dim storehouse of sensations past,
The impress full of tender awe, that night,
Which fell on me. It was as if the Christ
Had been drawn down from heaven to track us home,
And any of the footsteps following us
Might have been His."

How shall the preacher grow in the direction that has been indicated? What can we do to enrich our personality in spiritual wisdom and human sympathy? The first condition of growth is *the hunger* for a larger life. The growing preacher must have a holy discontent. Grateful he should be for all gifts and training, free from morbid introspection and envious murmuring, trusting the good hand of the Father; but never settling down into a low content. No man has a right to say, I have done my best, I have attained. Paul did not say that after thirty years of great life. He still forgot that which was behind and pressed toward the mark. The preacher often suffers from lack of honest criticism. He suffers from aloofness, says a keen critic in a recent Scribner's, and so from lack of that honest criticism which has to do with his life and the life of his message. Petty criticism of dress and manner he may sometimes get, but rarely that thoroughgoing

judgment of character and message that has to do with his mission. A smug self-satisfaction is fatal to growth. A man must be beaten out of all self-conceit with himself before he can be largely used of God. Mr. Hiram Powers was once asked by a friend, "Mr. Powers, what is your best work?" "Oh! the one I'm going to do next," was the happy answer of the artist. And that is the true spirit of the Christian preacher. The old failures are to be the scars of growth; the old successes are to be the steps of progress.

Enlargement of life is to be gained by cultivating *openness of mind*. Some men simply stiffen by the years.

> "They are the comfortable moles,
> Who let the have been be
> The limits of the good and true."

No revealing and creative experience is possible for them, no new quickening. They have had the sensations and tested the discoveries and settled down into the comfortable seat of tradition.

> "And now a flower is just a flower:
> Man, bird, beast, are but beast, bird, man, —
> Simply themselves, uncinct by dower
> Of dyes which, when life's day began,
> Round each in glory ran."

There is the inevitable tendency to fixedness of calling. Every vocation is rightly held by its great traditions. But the danger is, that what we have done becomes the ruts of our doing, and like all ruts, they narrow as they grow deeper. A modern English novelist describes a minister with "a closed mind," and the process is so unconscious, it goes on by all the laws of habit, that men stand in a new world deaf and dumb as to that which is moulding the habits and forming the ideals of multitudes of their fellow-men.

There must be flexibility of mind, if there is to be growth; the childlike spirit of eager, wondering, reverent search.

Growth is gained by *fidelity to the daily task.* To hold one's self sacredly to the hours of study, to bend mind and heart to it as the supreme task; to maintain the quiet of the soul, unbroken by the rush and clamor of material things; to meditate upon life and truth until the way shall be light and duty clear; to have the moments of chosen and conscious fellowship with God, spirit meeting with spirit; to practise the ways of increasing friendship and service,—these common paths of duty are the paths of the larger life. In such work the noblest powers are engaged, and the noblest growth attained. He that is willing to walk in the way

of the common Christian tasks will find the path mounting to the points of vision and inspiration.

But chiefest of all, the enlargement of manhood is to be gained *by fellowship with Christ.* It was said of the early preaching of Peter and John that the people marvelled: "And they took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus." And this relation has been true ever since. The noblest manhood is to be found by commerce with the thought and will and love of the perfect life. Christ's most distinguishing work is "the discovery and reintegration of broken or undeveloped lives and their upbuilding into strength and effectiveness."

The modern pulpit calls for a large life; and there is a rich, full manhood possible for any man who honestly recognizes his nature and its limitations, and makes a consecrated use of the divine means of growth.

III

THE PHYSICAL LIFE OF THE PREACHER

OUTLINE

The Body to be honored as a worthy part of man.
- Reasons for a false asceticism in the ministry.
- The harmony of the physical and spiritual.

The Body to be honored as the servant of the soul.
- The basis of the mental and the spiritual.
- The physical expression of the man.
- A sound body and the best personal influence.
- The relation of health to the message.
- The physical strength and the best work.
  - Reciprocal relation of health and work.
  - Health and the voice.
  - The special demand of the age upon strength.

How shall the Physical Strength of the Preacher be preserved?
- The proper diet — a matter of discipline.
- The proper sleep — sleep and temperament.
- Exercise: its time, place, and character.
  - The best exercise in the open air and in play. The legitimate functions of play.

A plea for disciplined vitality in the Preacher.

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III

THE PHYSICAL LIFE OF THE PREACHER

Charles Simeon of Cambridge University used to say to the young men preparing for the ministry, that the first requisite of good, hard reading was that they should take good care of the third milestone out of Cambridge. The preacher is called by virtue of the completeness of his manhood. This means that he is to be a man in physical life. We are to honor the body as a worthy part of us, to be trained and used as truly as the mind.

What is the Christian conception of the man? It is not a thin and contracted and wasted frame, a Simeon Stylites, passionless as a burnt-out volcano; it is the Christian athlete rather, with muscular limbs and well-rounded chest, and every physical faculty developed to its utmost efficiency.

"Let us not always say,
Spite of this flesh to-day
I strove, made head, gained ground upon the whole!
As the bird wings and sings,
Let us cry, 'All good things
Are ours; nor soul helps flesh more now than flesh helps soul.'"

There has been at times a contempt for the body, an effort to ignore it and suppress it as though it were an enemy of spiritual life.

Literalism has played the mischief with the Scriptures and fastened misconceptions and perversions of truth upon the doctrines and practice of generations of the church. The demands of Christ "to deny self and take up the cross and follow Him," "to pluck out the eye if it offend, to cut off the hand or the foot if it cause one to stumble," have been interpreted as casting reflections upon the physical life. Paul's famous duel between the flesh and the spirit, his strenuous figure of keeping the body under, were interpreted in the light of the old dualism of the East, as fixing the seat of sin in the physical life and not solely in the evil desire of the heart.

Monasticism came, child of protest to the universal insecurity and sensualism of the Old World, and of the Oriental dualism of good and evil, of spirit and matter. No doubt in the providence of God asceticism had its work to do. We do not reach the whole truth at a bound, but by painful and irregular steps. We say that the world had to be taught first the worth of the spirit, — the soul of man must be found; and the truth was taught by emphasizing the spirit at the expense of the body.

We have attained the fuller scripture view

that the body is something sacred as inseparable now from the spirit, as a part of the personality. It is the temple of God, and whoever destroys it "him shall God destroy." But the ascetic idea is hard to banish from the religious life. A vigorous body is still associated with the grosser temptations.

In a recent biography of Channing, one reads concerning his life as a young teacher in Richmond, Va., "'I spent a year and a half there, and perhaps the most eventful of my life. I lived alone, too poor to buy books, spending my days and nights in an outbuilding, with no one beneath my room, except during the hours of school keeping. There I toiled as I have never done since, for gradually my body sank under the unremitting exertion. With not a human being to whom I could communicate my deepest thoughts and feelings, and shrinking from common society, I passed through intellectual and moral conflicts of heart and mind so absorbing as often to banish sleep, and to destroy almost wholly the power of digestion. I was worn well-nigh to a skeleton. Yet I look back upon those days of loneliness and frequent gloom with thankfulness. If I ever struggled with my whole soul for purity, truth, and goodness, it was there. Then, amidst sore trials, the great question, I trust, was settled within me, whether

I would be the victim of passion, the world, or the free child and servant of God.

"'In a licentious and intemperate city, one spirit was preparing at least, in silence and loneliness, to toil not wholly in vain for truth and holiness.'" [1]

His biographer wisely comments on this letter: "Much beside the unremitting study and seclusion contributed to Channing's physical misery and the depression of his spirits. It would have been better for him if his opinion that 'the wants of the body are few,' 'mind, mind, requires all our care,' had been a mere opinion. Not only did he remain at his books until two or three o'clock in the morning, and often until the daylight broke, but he made harsh experiments in living, went insufficiently clothed, without an overcoat in winter weather, sleeping upon a bare floor in a cold room, eating very little, and that what he did not like. He fancied he was curbing the animal nature, when the temptations that assailed him were the spawn of his ascetic glooms. He thought that he was hardening himself, when he was making himself frail and pervious to every wind that blew." [2]

It is not true, as we well know, that the less

[1] Chadwick, "Life of Channing," p. 52.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 53.

the body the more spirit. Channing was himself well cured of his conceit that he must build his spiritual temple on the ruins of his body.

> "This frame, so weak, sharp sickness' hue,
> And this pale cheek God loves in you,"

was no longer his misconception, and he struggled bravely to free himself from the evil habits of his early years.

When men like John Hall and Phillips Brooks and Dwight L. Moody, physical giants, become as well known for their piety and spiritual power, we know that body and spirit are not opposing terms. The man who has a strong, wholesome physical life may thank God for it as one of His good gifts.

The body is to be honored as the servant of the soul, the instrument of the immortal spirit within. It is the basis of the mental and spiritual life. It is the physical expression of the man; it bears a subtle and vital relation to the soul life. In some sense — we cannot say how far — the visions of the mind, the spiritual states of the soul, will be determined by the conditions of the physical life.

F. W. Robertson thus comments on God's cure of Elijah's dejection by giving food, rest, and exercise: "Persons come to the ministers of God in seasons of despondency; they pervert

with marvellous ingenuity all the consolation which is given them, turning wholesome food into poison. Then we perceive the wisdom of God's simple, homely treatment of Elijah, and discover that there are spiritual cases for the physician rather than for the divine."

And Henry Ward Beecher speaks of health as the sweetener of work. "There is no pleasure in the world comparable to that which a man has who habitually stands before an audience with an errand of truth, which he feels in every corner of his soul, and in every fibre of his body, and to whom the Lord gives liberty of utterance. But I am conscious how largely the physical element of healthfulness enters into this experience. When I am depressed in body and heavy in mind I do not get it. You cannot expect either these exceptional, higher consummations, or the strong, steady flow of a joyful relish for your work, unless you cultivate a robust and healthful manhood." [1]

The body, then, is to be kept pure and sound, and well trained as the servant of the soul, as the means of its expression and influence.

Is not the best personal influence in some way connected with a sound body? Beautiful lives will at once be called to mind that are limited and crippled by weakness and suffering. Pain

[1] Beecher, "Yale Lectures," Vol. I, p. 192.

may be a minister of beauty. But such ministry is in quiet spheres, — the home, the circle of loved friends; not in the public places of society and the church. Then the weak lean upon the strong, and the men who bear the burdens long, without being themselves crushed by them, — the burden of cares and sorrows and sins, — must have some strength of physical life to match and support their moral power. It was upon the great physical and moral frame of a Lincoln that God placed the burdens of a nation.

It is certain that men are attracted by a sound body, by a wholesome physical life, and this we should seek and cultivate as a means of personal influence. The first impression of ourselves and of our truth is made through the physical life, and to have that impression pleasant and attractive cannot be beneath the attention of a Christian minister. Pity is the last thing that a manly man wishes to have. Sympathy he ought to receive — to be glad to receive — with a humble heart, if he needs sympathy in sickness and trials. But pity is another matter. No man would be pitied for his physical weakness if he has the soul of a man; and so, if limited in any physical way, he tries to cover it up and make people forget it. Pity is too closely allied with contempt. And the danger is, that people

will lose respect for the man who is ever the object of their pity.

There is natural leadership in a wholesome physical life. The fact that young Saul had an attractive person and stood head and shoulders above the people pointed to his natural kingship over men. The body has not only to do with personal influence among men, but with the public work of the preacher.

Our teachings need the color of health. The stomach has more to do than we think with the brain. The man who has ever had a touch of genuine dyspepsia knows how sombre the very landscape seems. More than one man has mistaken some disorder of his stomach for religious feeling. Shrewd old Lyman Beecher always inquired first about the health, if one came to him anxious about his soul.

"Untold spiritual treasure is slipping from our hands simply because we forget that religious states, as well as other states of mind, stand in a reciprocal relation with states of the brain and nervous system." [1]

Browning somewhere has a line about a man who awakes in the morning with the colic being unfit for empire. "The secret of many a dull, futile sermon is the depressed vitality of the minister." The morbid sensitiveness of a Rob-

[1] Coe, "The Spiritual Life," p. 86.

ertson, the beneficent sanity of a Phillips Brooks, had foundation in the physical manhood of each.

There is vital relation between health and thought. "Men in a high state of health invariably see more sharply the truth that they are after. They see its relations and its fitness. They have a sense of direction, combination, and of the power of relations of truth to emotion. The old-fashioned way of preparing a sermon was when a man sat down with his pipe, and smoked and thought as he called it, and after one, or two, or three hours, — his wife saying to everybody in the meantime, 'Dear man, he is upstairs studying; he has to study so hard!' — in which he has been in a muggy, fumbling state of mind, he at last comes out with the product of it for the pulpit. It is like unleavened bread, doughy, dumpy, and heavy, — hard to eat and harder to digest. There has been nothing put in it to vitalize it. But when a man is in a perfect state of health, no matter where he goes, he is sensitive to social influence, and to social wants. He discovers men's necessities instinctively. He is very quick to choose the instruments by which to minister to those necessities, so that when he goes to his study he has something to do, and he knows what it is." [1]

We are to cheer and uplift men by our pulpit

[1] Beecher, "Yale Lectures," Vol. I, p. 185.

speech. It is the soundest philosophy of preaching. "The failure of the pulpit is marked in respect to the mission of comfort," says Austin Phelps in "Men and Books." "If there is one thing more obvious than another, in the general strain of Apostolic preaching, it is the preponderance of words of encouragement over those of reproof and commination. In no other thing did inspired preachers disclose their inspired knowledge of human conditions more clearly. The world of to-day needs the same adaptation of the pulpit to its wants. We preach to a suffering and struggling humanity. Tempted men and sorrowing women are our hearers. Never is a sermon preached, but to some hearers who are carrying a load of secret grief.

"It is vastly easier to denounce secret sin than to cheer struggling virtue. Look over any large concourse of Christian worshippers, number the anxious and stern faces among them, — faces of men and women who are in the thick of life's conflict. Where shall the cunning hand be found to reach out and keep from falling these weary ones? Very early in life does the great struggle of probation begin. The buoyant joy of youth is short-lived.

"Shades of the prison-house begin to close upon the growing boy. With this one feature of human experience, probation, the mission of the

pulpit has chiefly to do. Above all other things, therefore, in the clerical character, this world craves the power of helpfulness. The Master walking on the sea in the night, and stretching forth his hand to the sinking Peter, is the emblem of that which the Christian preacher must be in every age, if he would speak to real conditions and minister to exigent necessities." [1]

And the point of the argument is simply this: the man of sound body, with the vigor of health in his veins, whose feelings and views are not colored by weakness and disease, is most likely to give the cheering, uplifting message of the Gospel.

Health is demanded for the best work. There is a buoyancy and energy in a full life that must find expression. It will not need to be driven by the lash of necessity or a strenuous will, but will spring to its work as a privilege, a thing of joy. The best work is always the outflow of a tireless energy. We must love our work if it is to be the noble work we desire.

And this is closely connected with our physical life. However lofty the purpose and pure the love, a weak and sickly body will make the work drag heavily. The boy must play if he is a well boy. The physical life must find an outlet, and so he runs and shouts in the mere exuberant joy

[1] Austin Phelps, "Men and Books," p. 30.

of life. Now a strong and well man has some such feeling as this. Take a man who is worn out with his work. He cannot sleep; he cares nothing for his food. He leaves his business, goes where care is shut out; gives himself to rest and recreation, sleeps and eats, and in a week he will say, — I feel like a boy again. Now, it is this fulness of physical life, this abounding vitality, that the minister should seek to preserve, that service may not be drudgery but a life-giving expression.

And it should be noted here that the joy of work has a corresponding effect on the physical life. "It literally makes us live more, and so gives a deeper sense of all other life. For this very reason it helps directly to convictions which make volitions easy. As Keats puts it, 'Axioms are not axioms until they have been felt upon our pulses.' We are made for joy — body and mind; our very constitution proclaims it. Pain is not a good in itself; and unnecessary depression and needless worry only lessen our power for work, and, what is more, weaken our power to will. The relation is close and simple. Joy directly increases our vitality. Greater vitality gives greater sense of reality. This means stronger convictions. Of convictions purposes are born. And conviction and purpose make influence certain. The spiritual life may not

safely ignore these plain facts. Joy has its very distinct mission and place in the spiritual life. Are not Christian ministers too prone to forget that the message they are set to bring is a Gospel — good news? An ultimate message of hope is essential to the strongest living." [1]

As to the fulness of the physical life, take the matter of the voice alone. It has a physical quality as truly as it is the index of the soul. Health or disease sounds in its tones. The preacher needs above all men a sound and strong body, that the voice may have what Henry Ward Beecher called the "thrust power," — conveying the sense of power, matching the truth with the sound, and pressing it home upon us.

"Who are the speakers that move the crowd? They are the men of great vitality and recuperative power. They are men who, while they have a sufficient thought-power to create all the material needed, have preëminently the explosive power by which they can thrust their materials out at men. They are catapults, and men go down before them. Of course, you will find men now and then, thin and shrivelled voiced, who are popular speakers. Sometimes men are organized with a compact nervous temperament and are slender framed, while

[1] King, "Rational Living," p. 138.

they have a certain concentrated earnestness, and in narrow lines they move with great intensity. John Randolph was such a man." [1]

Then the special demands upon the pulpit are met only by a great expenditure of physical life. The changed conditions of life in our country make physical manhood an essential for large success. And it is true in no sphere as in the pulpit, where vivacity of manner and range and volume of voice, physical qualities, are so instrumental in impressing the truth. A thin, piping tone, a lassitude of manner indicating low vitality, are almost powerless in swaying the minds of men.

"In successful public speaking the mind becomes abnormally awake, every nerve is stretched to its utmost, and an added strain is laid upon the heart. Only a man strong in body can bear a load so heavy through a term of years. First the stomach succumbs, then the nerves fail, then the voice grows flabby, the sword with which the preacher must do his work thus losing its edge, and his power over a congregation being hopelessly broken." [2]

There is not too much scholarship in our seminaries, but less learning would be safer than less bodily exercise. When John Angell

[1] Beecher, "Yale Lectures," Vol. I, p. 187.
[2] Jefferson, "The Minister as Prophet," p. 44.

James, the predecessor at Birmingham of Dr. Dale, finished his college course, "he was remarkable for nothing but impetuosity, breadth of chest, and such strongly developed pugilistic tendencies as to warrant the blunt estimate of his character, — 'the thick-headed fool is fit for nothing but fighting.'" And yet he became one of the noblest and most efficient ministers of the Word in the nineteenth century. Education with him had not been a process of emasculation, and he swept men with a magnificent physical earnestness.

It ought to be said that there has been a great improvement in the care and training of the body in the last twenty years. A college gymnasium is no longer considered a mere ornament, as useless as a zoölogical garden, but physical training has taken its place beside mental and moral, and outdoor sports have added the zest of the mind to the exercise of the body. "The ideal student," in the words of President Eliot of Harvard, "has been transformed from a stooping, weak, and sickly youth, into one well-formed, robust, and healthy." The figure of the young college man at the World's Fair, Chicago, formed from the measurements of ten years by Dr. Sargent of Harvard Gymnasium, is not unworthy to be put beside the figure of the Apollo Belvedere.

The practical question is, How shall a man keep and use his physical strength in the ministry? Three things have to do with our health and strength, viz.: food, sleep, and exercise.

Every man should judge for himself what kind and quantity of food he should take, and if need be, this judgment should be formed with the help of the wisest physician. It is a matter of discipline, remember, not what may please the palate for the moment, but what will give the greatest strength for service.

Then, — sleep, and enough of it. But the time will vary with the temperament. Many a man is working into the late hours of the night, burning the candle at both ends, deceiving himself with the idea that he is a great worker, when, by lack of system, he pushes into the night what could just as well have been accomplished by daylight, with ordinary devotion. President Mark Hopkins gave as the secret of his sturdy health and great power even into old age, that he always slept when he was tired.

"The truth is, you secretly despise the details of living. You pay no regard to the management of yourself. You fancy it is a noble Spartan virtue to neglect your body; and so, without being an ascetic, you just go on care-

lessly, casually, while the mechanism is continually running down through sheer inattention. For instance, you were confessing to me how rarely you keep any sort of rule as to bedtime, so that sleep grows shy of such an erratic wooer, and you work next day, jaded and depressed. We should hear of fewer nervous breakdowns, if men understood that regular sleep is as important as regular food. As to exercise, I have heard you plead the hoary old excuse, you are too busy. That may be quite true, but it is quite invalid. You have no business to be so busy. You will double your real efficiency when you cancel half your small engagements. You are a Christian specialist, and on the very lowest ground you cheapen your office, as well as dissipate your energy, by this endless entanglement in petty local affairs; it is fatal to the mental aloofness and spiritual detachment which your proper work requires." [1]

And what shall we do for exercise?

What are the requisites for the best physical training? A set time, a fixed amount, in the open air, and of a kind that shall engage the mind as well as the body. A minister may need to content himself for most of the time with work in his garden, caring for his horse or cow, walking or riding in his parish work. These are

[1] "The Clerical Life," p. 142.

all good, but not the best. The best exercise is that which engages the mind as well as the body; not the mind in serious thought, but in exciting and absorbing play. If a man cannot have a half hour a day in gymnasium, or on tennis court, or in some other play, then let him devote a whole day as often as once a month to recreation. The minister is to be pitied who does not know how to recreate, who is not fond of some out-of-door sport.

We must not forget the two very simple and primal laws of our nature, the law of play as the means of physical growth, and the law of play as the means of repairing the wastes of work. Play is no less divine than work. We see this in the child. The boy that plays the best, other things equal, makes the best man. And when manhood is reached, the mission of play is not ended. It exercises the faculties untouched by toil, and so helps to harmonious development. By the enjoyable use of other powers, it enables the toiler to rest those weary with too constant use. Play keeps men from becoming the thing they do. It trains the weak and flabby muscle into manly strength and says to work, "You shall not take all the freshness and buoyancy out of life, and turn the human form divine into a mere thinking machine."

Play has a legitimate function in the life of

the man as the child. A great blessing would it be if the world recognized this fact and resorted to recreation intelligently and conscientiously, and forever exploded the idea that play is inconsistent with Christian devotion and worldly thrift and manly dignity.

What a delight has he who can turn from the weariness of books to the mental rest and physical action of true recreation!

"Up, up! my friend, and quit your books,
Or surely you'll grow double;
Up, up! my friend, and clear your looks;
Why all this toil and trouble?

"The sun above the mountain's head,
A freshening lustre mellow,
Through all the long green field has spread
His first sweet evening yellow.

"Books! 'tis a dull and endless strife:
Come, hear the woodland Linnet,
How sweet his music! on my life,
There's more of wisdom in it.

"And hark! how blithe the throstle sings!
He, too, is no mean preacher:
Come forth into the light of things,
Let Nature be your teacher.

"She has a world of ready wealth,
Our minds and hearts to bless —
Spontaneous wisdom, breathed by health,
Truth breathed by cheerfulness.

"One impulse from a vernal wood,
May teach you more of man,
Of moral evil and of good,
Than all the sages can.

"Enough of science and of art;
Close up those barren leaves;
Come forth, and bring with you a heart
That watches and receives." [1]

Dr. John Brown, the genial Scotch essayist, deals with the case of the preacher who thinks himself too busy and earnest to indulge in physical exercise and recreation: "All very well, say you, 'it is easy speaking and saying — "Take it easy," but if the pot's on the fire it maun bile.' It must, but you needn't poke up the fire forever; and you may now and then set the kettle on the hob and let it sing, instead of leaving it to burn its bottom out." [2]

We cannot have bodies too sound and strong for our work. We shall need every particle of disciplined vitality for the strenuous activity demanded of the minister in this age and land, and for the risks and exposures of foreign lands. In every public service of the minister the physical life tells, and there are certain times of strain and exposure, of tremendous responsibility, when the burdens of many lives are put

[1] Arnold's Wordsworth, "The Tables Turned," p. 137.
[2] "Spare Hours," Vol. 2, page 146.

upon him, that only a life with these resources of strength can endure the strain. We may rejoice that in any work, or exercise, or recreation that becomes a man, we may have a part. The laws of health, of food and rest and exercise, are as much God's laws as the Decalogue and the Sermon on the Mount. Nature's laws are God's laws.

> "And out of darkness came the hands
> That reach thro' nature, moulding men."

Let us not fail because we lack the courage or are too self-indulgent to enter upon such a course of life as a true Christian manliness requires.

"No special gifts can absorb a minister from the elementary obligation to keep his body and mind at the highest possible pitch of efficiency for the work which is given him to do." [1]

The whole doctrine of physical manhood for the preacher is not the body for the body's sake, but for Christ's sake. Shall we not say with Charles Kingsley, "I could wish that I were an Apollo for His sake!"

[1] "Clerical Life," p. 140.

IV

THE INTELLECTUAL LIFE OF THE PREACHER

OUTLINE

Christianity and the Intellectual Life.

The Bible does not substitute piety for the intellectual life.

Christianity has quickened the intellectual life.

The intellectual life in the pulpit.

The breadth of its intellectual work.

The influence of Intellectual Culture upon the character of the Preacher.

It makes men sincere. It corrects the tendencies of a false liberalism and a false conservatism.

It makes men humble. Humility is born of the larger vision of truth and life. Convictions are held in the spirit of tolerance.

It makes balanced men.

The law of change and variety in work.

The influence of Intellectual Culture upon Preaching.

It maintains a high ideal of the sermon.

It meets the demand for strong preaching.

It keeps the pulpit from mental poverty.

It sustains a full life.

It makes the sermon appropriate and timely.

It makes the sermon a growth, the expression of a growing life.

Effect upon the style of the sermon.

The relation of Intellectual Culture to the Preacher's personal influence.

Influence depends upon the range of interests.

The use for the noblest culture.

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IV

THE INTELLECTUAL LIFE OF THE PREACHER

In considering the intellectual life of the preacher, to the exclusion, for the moment, of the particular questions of piety and spirituality, the head is not exalted at the expense of the heart. Piety is the first and indispensable requisite of the pulpit. The man who does not have a personal knowledge of the Christ, a fixed purpose, and a daily striving to do what pleases Him, can be neither His friend nor His messenger. While thus exalting the spiritual life, it needs frequent utterance, that piety cannot be a substitute for mental power and possession.

No such mistake is ever made in the Scriptures. The Lord chose a few humble men, to be sure, but their mental nature received a marvellous quickening and training by the Master-Teacher. The young fisherman of Galilee grew to be the profound interpreter of the life of Christ, and of the Christian's deepest experience. The conception of a preacher in the Old Testament is

a teacher. A prophet declares that "the priest's lips should keep knowledge."[1] "Give attention to reading" is the word of the Apostle Paul. He would have his ministers "workmen that need not be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Life." "Add to faith, knowledge." Faith and knowledge are joined in the divine plan of character and power. Faith is to be rational and knowledge spiritual.

Then we must always remember that piety, spirituality, is not a mere matter of emotion. It is, first of all, a mental state, the "mind of the Spirit" and the "mind of Christ"; a clear rational view of truth and duty in the Gospel, a mental concept, ever growing in vividness and reality, as the faculties of the mind consider the things of Christ.

Through the intellect must truth touch the affections and will, and become love and purpose. Feeble and evanescent the feelings, however pure and holy at the time, that are not fed by great thoughts. So in pleading for a true intellectual culture, I also plead for that which is essential to a strong and abiding spirituality.

The Spirit is the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, and must lead to conviction by first bringing truth to bear upon the perception and

[1] Mal. ii. 7.

reason, the mental nature. He is the Spirit of truth and so cannot tolerate the careless, and superficial, and thoughtless dealing with the mighty problems of being.

Revelation is embodied in a history, and literature, and philosophy; and while the King's highway is lifted up, plain even for a simple-minded wayfarer, the life to which it points transcends human experience, and starts the mind upon the track of infinite search. The truths of Christianity make their appeal to reason, and demand the exercise of the highest reason of man.

Christianity has largely made the intellectual life. The Bible has freed the mind and quickened its powers, and led to the investigations of science, and the discussions of being, and the critical dealing with theory and fact. The Bible stands in an ever growing environment of meditation, and criticism, and interpretation. Christianity has created the pulpit and the modern sermon with its educative force, with its duty of feeding the mind as well as the heart. It cannot do the latter without the first.

There are good men, not marked by mental keenness and culture, even illiterate men, who have been spiritual forces. One may admit the word of Dr. Robertson Nicoll: "The greatest good has been accomplished by untutored men

who have declared the Gospel of Christ with passionate earnestness and the intense love of souls."

But the highest mental culture and attainment can find unreached heights and depths in the Gospel, and in this time of rapid enlightenment, the growth of popular education is making new and higher demands upon the ministry.

No one can be long misled by the fancy that the world is to be gained by social management or fervent feeling. The brain in the end will govern the feet. The long and hard mental work of the schools is but the beginning of the matured and concentrated work of manhood. A scholarly ministry will always outlast an emotional one, and build a stronger Church. The influence of Scotchmen to-day upon the intellectual life of the English-speaking world, their supremacy in statesmanship, philosophy, criticism, literature, and religion, can be traced unmistakably to an educated pulpit, that taught men to think upon the greatest subjects.

Men sometimes grow impatient of careful criticism and what they please to call the dry intellectual life of the schools. Of course, it is possible to have a scholarship in which all the elemental passions are dried up. Criticism may dwell so minutely on little things as to lose all

prophetic vision. But we cannot afford to do without this foundation work. It is much like the great piers of the bridge — largely out of sight — on which the arches rest, and over which the multitudes pass safely to and fro.

We must be mentally alive to the present problems of religion, to the varied and pressing questions of our civilization. Many voices tell us that our eyes must be open; that we must set our intellectual manhood to interpret the life of the generation, that we suffer no truth of man or of nature to possess our fellowmen, forming laws of conduct and ideals of life, while we stand deaf and dumb, ignorant and speechless.

It means the perspective of history, against which each problem shows its true significance. It means patient hours of study while other men rest or recreate. It means mental keenness and breadth. The words of an eminent jurist have a meaning for the preacher: "No man ever comes to great eminence in the law without a white face and a bent back."

We are to be preëminently teachers of men, and this is intellectual work, and this implies that we be "learners," to use the Old Testament name for the prophet.

"He who would guide the thought of this perplexed age on the highest of all themes must

set himself to master his instrument by discipline, by labor, by economies, even perhaps by agonies."

The breadth of intellectual work demanded of the preacher must teach the need of scholarly culture. He is to make an inductive study of men, the heredity, training, ideas, motives, character, and circumstances, of each person of his parish, — to know men, not in the mass, but as the individual. He is the pathologist of the soul, and whatever will throw light upon man, — whatever is the expression of the race, or the age, or the individual — history, or poetry, or philosophy, whatever it may be, — is within the range of his eager inquiry.

Then he is to be the inductive student of the Scriptures. Whatever will make the Bible a real and living book; whatever will give him the mastery of the instrument of words, putting him in the place of the sacred writers, living in their atmosphere, seeing truth as they saw it, — all this is within the sphere of his earnest study.

Then in our work truth is not for its own sake. It is to be converted into conviction, and purpose, and passion; and all this made vocal that men may hear and believe.

Whatever shall teach the minister to think clearly and consistently; whatever shall quicken

his sensibilities, and make them keen and pure; whatever shall make his speech a fit and effective instrument of thought, — all this is a proper object of training and is vitally affected by the intellectual life.

Such in general is the breadth of the minister's work, and such the variety of intellectual interest and training demanded for the highest power.

Now, to come closer to the subject, let us ask the value of scholarly culture for the minister as a man, the minister as a preacher, and the minister as a leader of men.

Relation to character.

The influence of scholarly culture is to make men sincere, humble, well-balanced, uniting earnestness with charity.

The Christian scholar desires to be true, true in thought and true in life, and this is the natural result of a sanctified scholarship. Natural moods, gusts of feeling, often leading to eccentric forms of doctrine and life, are judged by reason and modified by the history of opinion. There are two strong tendencies in the church, as there have often been before, with varying degree; the one exalting individual opinion, the other resting on authority.

There are men whose mental and emotional attitude is ever looking forward. They have

little reverence for the past, but great respect for the present and their own opinions. They have a passion for change, identifying change with progress. So the new things in the Church must be the true things: the new forms of worship and work, the new views of Scripture, and the new statements of doctrine. It is somewhat a matter of temperament, and still more of training; but young men, I think, as a class, are fond of what promises progress. And they ought to be so, for to the open hearts and minds of young men, God's truth may come with fuller measure and force. "A young man's first impressions of truth and life are among God's reformatory forces of the world." — STALKER.

And yet we must feel that the tendency is sometimes a temptation to novelty and self-assertion. There is an undue eagerness for the new, without the patient waiting to find whether it has foundation more real than fancy. And the right of the individual conscience and the spirit of independence not seldom drive men from beaten paths to pursue truth, when it is the mirage of their own vision they are following.

And the other tendency is also marked: to rest upon received opinion and customary form and method. What has been found concerning the Scriptures is the limit of knowledge; what has been done by the Church in work and

worship must have exact repetition in every age. And so men of this spirit do as the fathers have done, without regard to the new problems and particular needs of the generation; and they speak truth in the form and spirit of another age, blind to the fuller light that providence and the Spirit of God has thrown upon the sacred page. What shall be the corrective of the evil extreme in both directions, — a false liberalism, and a false orthodoxy? I answer: the scholarly culture of a mind living in the secret of the Lord. Such a mind will ask only one question about doctrine and plan — "Is it true, and does it accomplish its true purpose?" Not, is it popular or traditional, but, is it true? Not, does it gratify my taste, or help my personal power, or agree with a church creed, but first and always, is it taught in Scripture, and is it verified in Christian experience? We should be more willing to bring every opinion to this test and have more faith in the self-evidencing power of the truth.

Then we shall escape the subtle temptations to insincerity peculiar to the ministry, and be sincere in the Bible sense of "tested by the sunlight," — doctrine and life ever viewed in the clearest light of the Scriptures.

You will agree with me, then, that to be a sincere student of the Word demands accurate

knowledge, keenness of perception, breadth of wisdom, — the resultant of true mental culture.

Scholarly culture helps to keep the minister intellectually humble. And the humble mind is closely allied to the humble heart. The danger of a little learning has passed into a popular proverb, and the only cure for the evil is larger knowledge. Small and superficial knowledge of the Scriptures and of theology, and of philosophy that has so much to do with the formulating of theology, not seldom accompany opinions the most exclusive and overwhelming in their claim. Men who differ from these self-appointed popes, however conscientious and pure in life, are in culpable ignorance or dangerous heresy. Oh! for the humility that comes from the honest effort to know more of the truth, — and above all, the honest effort to follow it. Isaiah describes the true prophet as one who has the tongue of the learner — not of the learned (R.V.) "and whose ear is opened every morning to hear the message of the new day." There can be no censorious pride in the heart of him who has caught glimpses of realms of thought still unmastered, and of life still unattained.

The humility born of this larger vision of truth and life will not have less positive convictions, but more Christlike tolerance, for those who see and follow the same truth, but from a

slightly different angle of vision. I know it is not any easy attainment: strength of conviction, with charity for those who follow not us. It is easy to denounce the bigot, without prizing the strength of his faith. The world must not lose its faith. We must hold fast the truth as God gives us to see the truth; and we must grow in that charity that thinketh no evil. "Belief and charity are not in their true associations." Mercy and truth in the life of the Church have not met together.

It is said of Dr. Caspar Hodge of Princeton, the greatest of the Hodges, that he taught his own views of truth with the greatest clearness and force, and that sometimes he would stop in the midst of doctrinal exposition and with new light on his face exclaim: "Young men, I hold and cherish these views of the Scriptures, but I must tell you that there are men who differ from me, my peers in knowledge, and before whose spiritual attainment I bow in humility. I cannot understand it, but I must admit the fact."

Then, scholarly culture keeps the minister from one-sidedness. Broader knowledge helps him to healthful balance of mind and character. I do not state this in opposition to the well-known saying: "Beware the man of one book." True culture is not dissipation of energies, but

concentration of them. And the energies come to the definite and supreme work of Bible study and use, enriched and strengthened by their activity in other fields.

We must obey the law of change and variety in work, if mental powers are to be kept in the highest state of activity and efficiency. Mr. Spurgeon was fond of likening his study of geology to the opening of the windows of his mind that God's pure air might blow through. And God's breath sweeps through many fields of thought.

Continual mental action in one direction tends to give the mind a fixedness in that direction, and at last an inability to work in any other way. The study of preachers is good food and training for the minister's mind; but it would be a positive calamity to any man to shut himself up to the reading of sermons, especially sermons of one school or age. The mind would lose its vivacity, and the pulpit decline in freshness and originality. Then the unchanging pursuit of a single subject, especially a partial and unscholarly pursuit of that one, will take a man out of sympathy with his fellow-men, and give an undue proportion and emphasis to certain truths, that will not commend the Gospel to the conscience of men. They will say that he is a partisan, and the force of his words will

be qualified as lacking the breadth of true Scripture interest and sympathy.

"Culture adds power to spiritual gifts," says Dr. Hoppin, "and we are called upon to cherish broad views of our office and work as servants of the all-comprehending Gospel. We must not close our eyes to whatever is divine in nature and its everlasting types; in literature, which is the spirit of God and man embodied in language and a criticism of life; in history, which is the manifestation of Divine will in the education of humanity; and in art, which is the expression of the life and spirit of peoples and ages, and the study of the beauty of the Divine mind. We should seek variety of intellectual culture. We should not have petty views of our calling, nor confine ourselves to the mental metes and bounds of a conventional idea of the ministry, but regard it as the highest and broadest calling among men to interpret the divine in all things, to teach the knowledge of God in His infinite fulness and perfection." [1]

In the second place, scholarly culture has relation to the work of the pulpit.

It maintains a high ideal of the sermon; not simply of the sermon as an artistic production, but as the means of accomplishing a great work. A study of the average audience of to-day will

[1] Hoppin, "Pastoral Theology," p. 150.

reveal a condition that demands a larger mental life in the pulpit.

Why are the men of the community so noticeably absent, or in the minority in our churches? Is the soul in man less sensitive and responsive to the Gospel? Are men under greater distractions of worldliness and quicker to feel the destructive influences of doubt? These reasons are not sufficient to account for the small proportion of men in the average congregation. We must go deeper than this.

Look at some of the special difficulties felt by the pulpit. In the desire to attract the people, and in the fear lest thorough teaching of the truths of religion would weary the mind, the sermon has been made bright often at the expense of thought: illustration and anecdote have scarcely covered the poverty of thought. A frequent appeal has been made to sentimentalism. Organization has frequently overshadowed the teaching office; the mechanics of religion have usurped the prophet's place. Ethical movements of thought and society that called for the leadership of strong men have been too frequently ignored by the pulpit, and so have found their material and courses outside the churches. For these reasons in part, there have been too many earnest, thinking men who did not find their needs met by the pulpit, and have

been content to stay at home. They have not respected the pulpit as the teacher of religion and morals. Strong preaching is demanded; not lacking in brightness, using all reasonable means of attraction, but quick to read the moral needs of the day, and strong to reach conscience, and rich in food for minds as well as heart. Preaching must command the respect of minds and train mental power in the audience. The words of Bishop Foss of the Methodist Episcopal Church are appropriate here: "The preaching needed must come from men in the strenuous and perpetual process of an ever increasing intellectual culture and power. It is not to be gotten by skimming newspapers or dawdling over magazines, nor by looking at the backs of encyclopædias. Nothing gives it but a steady, hard effort to master great books."

Scholarly culture keeps the pulpit from mental poverty. The practical question for every minister is how to keep the mind trained and furnished. The ceaseless giving out requires as ceaseless pouring in. The attractiveness of the young minister for many is not only in his enthusiasm, but in the element of hopefulness. He is to be a larger man and to do larger things for them. Alas, if the man fails of this reasonable hope! Unless a man grows, he is on the road to mental bankruptcy. He repeats himself

and the people soon begin to tire of his ministry; and so he must put the machinery in motion to find another field. Studious ministers always outwear popular ministers. They gather a more substantial church, and the people grow in intelligence and character. They are equal to every demand upon them, and they become the equal of strong men and leaders in the community.

"Besides attending to theological studies in general, one ought to have a specialty. Perhaps the best specialty to choose is some subject which is just coming into notice, such as at present Comparative Religion, or Christian Ethics, or best of all, Biblical theology. Such a specialty, early taken up, is like a well dug on one's property, which year by year becomes deeper. All the little streams and rivulets of reading and experience find their way into it, and almost unawares the happy possessor comes to have within himself a fountain which makes it impossible that his mind should ever run dry." [1]

To come closer still to the actual making of the sermon, notice the relation of culture to the choice of subjects. There are three considerations to be held in mind in the choice for the subject of any particular sermon, viz.: what has been the line of recent preaching; what are

[1] Stalker, "The Preacher and His Models," p. 254.

the present needs of the people; and what interests you and leads you to the desire for its discussion. When these three unite in any passage, then you may rest assured of your work and go to the people with the same conviction that a prophet of old had, saying, "This is the Lord's message." Undoubtedly the second is the chief consideration: What are the present needs of the people? And how shall we know the present needs? Shall we judge by the last pastoral call, — by a single pastoral experience? It may be a hasty and superficial judgment. He best reads the case of individual need who knows the community; and he best reads the need of his parish who has the profoundest view of the forces of modern life. For there is little isolation now. One need is a phase of the general need. And the broadest experience and knowledge will be helpful to this matter of spiritual perception.

Another question comes: Shall the sermon be a manufacture or a growth? The best ministers have sermons that are made, but the best sermons always grow. They are truths that have become known by experience, and they have taken their form by thinking and living, until the time for their utterance comes, then they are truth through a person — God's message and your message — the fruit of your

life of the truth. I believe the people know the difference between a sermon that is crammed and a sermon that grows. The one shows that truth has been sought for an occasion; the other, truth for truth's sake. And there is too often crude opinion and hasty conviction in such work. Too frequent quotation is the sure sign of cramming and undigested opinion.

But the ideal of the sermon is growth, and growth demands the broadest kind of mental life; a mind, first of all, studious of the Scriptures and also of the chief parts of human interests — ever seeking truth for truth's sake, and so never lacking a message for men.

Then there is a close connection between breadth of culture and the style of the sermon.

The untrained man either is always the same, dull and monotonous in the expression of his thoughts, or else fickle, as the penmanship of an untrained hand. In either case, there is no essential and personal element of style. It requires familiarity with the best thought to make the best style. It is true, men pass through periods of imitation, but in this way, through admiration, they find their own voice. The vividness, and richness, and fulness of the language in the best minds will be assimilated and gain personal expression. Thus the sermon will have individuality and variety of style. It

will be the voice of the man, and will have exact relation to the changing thought and feeling.

But does not culture in the minister make a gulf between the pulpit and the people? Does it not give to preaching a literary flavor and finish that weakens the blow? I answer, it need not be the result of a Christian culture. The first scholar in the world, if he have the love of Christ in his heart, and the Christian's yearning for souls, will reach them, and his training will make him do it sooner and more effectively.

The trouble is with the heart more than with the head. And the man who finds himself preaching to a literary few, and thinking of nicety more than strength, of polishing and refining more than of his message and the men before him, has need of instant and prayerful self-examination. He does not need to forget his culture, but to get a new heart.

A word is in place as to the indirect relation of culture to a minister's success.

We need culture to conquer prejudices against God's message. We are called to intercourse with capable and intelligent men, and must meet them on the ground of their tastes and training. Without breadth of intellectual interest and culture, we shall lose our opportunity.

"One's possible influence over others depends,

in no small degree, upon the range of his interests, for influence normally requires sympathetic understanding, and sympathetic understanding means the ability to enter into the interests of the other man, — to see the matter from his point of view. Here lies the main task of every teacher, and of every leader of men, who does not mean to be a mere demagogue. If one cares to exert the highest influence — not merely to dominate another's choices — then he must seek such an influence as the other shall be able to recognize as simply the demand of his own sanest and best self. That influence is possible only to the man who has sufficient breadth of interests to enter into another's life with understanding, respect, and sympathy." [1]

Intellectual and social problems fill the minds of earnest men; and we believe that these problems will never be answered until the Gospel word is given and accepted. Whether the answer is to be given from the pulpit or in social life, the minister is called to be a careful student of such problems.

I do not think it is possible for us to be too well furnished. It is true, we can afford to — we must — let many things go in order to be masters of the one Book. But never let the plea be the sanctimonious one, — to hide our

[1] King, "Rational Living," p. 11.

indifference to culture, or poverty of attainment.

"If I could be persuaded that the theory of ministerial culture which I have tried to represent to you could result legitimately in any such drifting asunder of the pulpit and the lower orders of society, I would abandon the whole of it. I would drop it as I would a viper. A preacher had better work in the dark, with nothing but mother-wit, a quickened conscience, and a Saxon Bible to teach him what to do and how to do it, than to vault into an aërial ministry in which only the upper classes shall know or care anything about it. You had better go and talk the Gospel in the Cornish dialect to those miners who told the witnesses summoned by the command of the English Parliament that they had "never heard of Mister Jesus Christ in these mines," than to do the work of the Bishop of London. Make your ministry reach the people; in the form of purest culture if you can, but reach the people; with elaborate doctrine if possible, but reach the people; with classic speech if it may be, but reach the people. The great problem of life to an educated ministry is to make their culture a power instead of a luxury.

"It is not less education that our clergy need. It is inconceivable to me how any educated man

can see relief from our present dangers, or from any dangers, in that direction. Ignorance is a remedy for nothing. Imperfection of culture is always a misfortune." [1]

An American woman of the finest training, taste, and manners, who would have graced any society, spent her life as a missionary in Africa. Yet she testified that there was no wasted gift, no unused attainment. All the culture of her beautiful youth — music, and letters, and art — found their place in the christianizing of a savage people. So I believe it to be with God's servants everywhere. Whatever is true and beautiful, whatever can quicken the mind and feed the heart, is acceptable to Christ and blessed to men.

[1] Phelps, "Theory of Preaching," p. 583.

V

THE INTELLECTUAL METHOD OF THE PREACHER

OUTLINE

The nature of pulpit work an argument for Method.
- The variety of pulpit topics.
- The demands of the same congregation.
- The pressure of parish work.
- The need for the enrichment of life.

Method the condition of the Preacher's Growth.
- The test of the early years.

Special danger to the Preacher is Lack of Method.
- In the fact that he is his own master.
- In the variety of interests brought to him.
- In the pressure of life.
- In the unwonted range of duties.

The Power of Method.
- It utilizes time easily wasted.
- It makes a full man and so an instructive pulpit.
- The moral elevation attending true method.

The possible danger of Method.

What should be covered by Method?
- Systematic knowledge of the Bible.
- The religious and social thought of the age.
- Some department of higher literature for delight and power.

Method in study related to Method of Teaching.
- Value of a church year.
- Need of a yearly outline for a free pulpit.
- Suggestions as to method.
- Hints as to courses of sermons.

Principles of Method — Phillips Brooks.
- Two practical suggestions.

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V

THE INTELLECTUAL METHOD OF THE PREACHER

The young man who preaches continuously in the same pulpit frequently says, "It seems at the end of each Sunday that I should never have anything to say again." It suggests the exhausting work of giving two and often three addresses a week on religion to the same group of people, year after year. It reminds one of the sort of apology for the pulpit made several years ago, by Charles Dudley Warner (no doubt a humorous exaggeration), that the minister had as much writing to do as the editor, as much correspondence as the average business man, and as many calls to make as the doctor. Much of the preacher's work is bound to be imperfectly done, ideals shattered by the hard necessities of daily life; and none of it will be worthy of a Gospel workman, a co-laborer with God, unless the intellectual life is kept full, and this life obeys the best laws of habit.

One of the brightest and most devoted of

preachers has said that one of the serious difficulties of his ministry was to know what to preach upon. He felt that he often wasted much precious time hunting for a text; sometimes half the week was gone before he was able to settle upon his subjects for the coming Sunday. Here again was a practical question of method.

"I know," said John Wesley, "were I to preach one whole year in one place, I should preach both myself and my congregation asleep. Nor can I believe it was ever the will of the Lord that any congregation should have one preacher only. No one whom I ever yet knew has all the talents which are needful for beginning, continuing, and perfecting the work of grace in a whole congregation."[1]

There are men who grow very little in the ministry. Their sermons are repetitions of the few truths learned in the class room, or out of a few books of religion. They grow weary of the ceaseless demands of mental and spiritual production. They allow the practical demands of the parish and the business of getting ready two sermons for the Sunday to break into their studious habits. And they deceive themselves into thinking that the difficulties are peculiar

[1] Quoted by Mason, "The Ministry of Conversion," p. 148.

to their present parish, and so they set in motion the wheels to secure another church, — they join the army of candidates that fairly besiege the doors of every fair field. Such examples — and they are everywhere in the ministry — call special attention to intellectual methods.

"Ministers are of two classes. There are those whose profession springs from their lives; there are those whose lives spring from their profession. The one class is continually, in the spirit of a large vision, getting ready for life; the other, in a small horizon of a microscopic glance, is always preparing for next Sunday."

You listen to some sermons and you feel that they are scrap-book sermons — pieced together; they are crammed from commentaries and homiletic hand-books. There is truth but no consistency, no singleness, no strong and glowing life flows forth, and so there is little refreshing and fruit-bearing. There may be brightness and timeliness, but no systematic teaching of truth. The congregations may be large, and a certain enthusiasm for the Church, but little growth in the grace and knowledge of Christ, and so in the fruit of the Spirit. Such churches are not strong in the Lord, because their leaders are not mighty in the Scriptures. Again, the defect is largely in the intellectual habits.

There is little systematic enrichment of life, and so in the sermon there is little life to give.

There is need of a strong word in regard to the method of the minister's intellectual life.

The deepest, strongest currents flow between well-defined banks. And the mental life is the strongest, not that flows hither and thither according to the gust of the moment, but with a steady purpose between the limits of reasonable methods.

The preacher must have method if he grows strong, if each man brings out the utmost increase of his gifts for the Master's use.

The man goes forth from the seminary with certain ideals of work. Like a master workman, one that does not need to be ashamed, shall he steadily move towards the ideal with increasing efficiency or shall he succumb to easy and superficial habits, and the stress of distracting and opposing circumstances?

The first years of the ministry will put to the severest test the ideals of work that have been formed. They will fix the methods and habits of life. If one does not grow in the power of exegesis then, he will probably give up all thorough preparation for the pulpit. If he does not grow then in the mastery of great books, he will probably get his mental food in

skimming newspapers and dipping into the current literature of magazines.

It has been said so often by men of varied experience that there must be large truth in it, that the first five years of a man's ministry are the index of his future. They are prophetic of weakness or of power. It simply means that they largely form the standards and habits of his life. "The first five years of my ministry were practically wasted," said a well-known minister of the Church, and in later years he has tried, though not with entire success, to make up for the irregularity of his earlier studies.

The minister is in special danger of unmethodical work from his peculiar circumstances. He is no longer at the call of the bell, and the hours of the academic life need be kept no longer. The laborer in nearly every other sphere — the doctor, the lawyer, the merchant, the teacher — must keep certain hours and follow certain routine of work. But happily or unhappily, the minister is master of himself, of his hours and his powers. Or at least, he may seem so; but there is a master not himself, — the public opinion of the Church, and above this still, the head of the Church. But the trouble is that the day of judgment may be postponed. The wasting of energies and the neglect of powers may not bring the sharp and immediate "cast him out"

pronounced upon the unprofitable servant. If he is only ready in some way for the immediate demands of the pulpit, the mental poverty may be concealed even from himself.

If he is a country pastor, nature presents her attractions or demands: the morning is bright, the air pure and bracing, it is a good time to care for his garden or take a drive into the country. If the day is lowery, it is a good time to go a-fishing. He will think of his sermon while he works or plays, or he throws a sop to his conscience by leaning over the fence and talking with a neighbor about the church, or calling a moment upon some country parishioner.

If he is a city pastor, there are the more powerful attractions of human interests. The morning papers come to his door, or letters from an ever growing correspondence. These press many curious and vital questions upon him. He is not a recluse, a book-worm, but open to the voices of each new day. The World's Congress of Religion is more important than the Council of Trent; the agitations of the unemployed than the contests of Guelphs and Ghibellines. He is a man, and nothing that concerns man can be foreign to him. He is a man of God, and is bound to see the handwritings upon the walls of modern cities. The temptations of human interests are very great. He may spend the

best hour of the morning on his paper or review. Alexander Maclaren exhorts young men to keep the newspaper out of the study until after dinner, and Dr. Pattison adds the gloss, — "the later you dine the better."

Then, we live in an age of organization and social pressure. The church may be a huge machine, needing attention in a hundred parts. The minister may sink his prophetic office in management. Instead of a leader, he may be a boss. Instead of trusting others and showing them their work and inspiring them to it, he may insist upon having his hand upon every part of it. And so his time and strength may be cut up by committee meetings, and printing, and all sorts of schemes. "Faith and expediency alike call you away from these side issues, that you may have leisure and vigor to spare for the greatest things of all."

He is a public man and a social leader and wishes to have the largest influence, and he may forget that the best thing he can do for Christ's Kingdom is to establish a spiritual Church, and that this requires the most careful spiritual teaching; and he may never say "no" to invitations for social meetings and convention speeches, and all sorts of extras. When Mr. Hillis followed David Swing, he said to his people, "You must not expect me to be a social

roundsman, if I am to bring to you a helpful word of God." When Dr. Gordon went to the Old South Church, Boston, he vowed for the first two years to say "no" to every outside call, and he kept his vow, and now he has the freedom of the country. Dr. Tucker, in a lecture on "The Unmaking Process," speaks of the "subtle refinement of laziness that postpones the hard and exacting duty beyond the one which is easier and more agreeable. The minister has an unwonted range of duties. Every day gives a large choice. He can satisfy his conscience by keeping at work indiscriminately; he can be the busiest man in town, and yet leave his great task undone. He is simply working out of proportion. He can do this; few other men can. And every preacher is working out of proportion when he does not make preaching the one high, commanding, inspiring duty of his life." [1]

Think of the power gained by method.

It utilizes the moments that would otherwise go to waste. It is not a plea for a bookish life. Men are more than books. And the time spent in friendly intercourse with men, understanding their natures, putting self in their place, and the moments of recreation, care-free and even idle, may be among the best moments of life. The

[1] "The Making and Unmaking of the Preacher," p. 70.

seeking of men is divine, and play may be as divine as work. But every man knows that system is the only way to save time, in the sense of putting it to the proper use, as also in the sense of securing the hours for the various demands of the pulpit and parish.

Take the odd moments in waiting for others, or the moments of relief in turning from one work to another. A book on the table may be mastered and not draw at all upon the larger portions of time. But if there is no plan, the book will not be there.

The pastor of one of the churches in the middle West has gained a comprehensive knowledge of modern missions by this systematic use of the odd moments. Method is the only way to reach the many-sidedness of the highest pulpit power. Results that seem prodigies to lazy and irregular minds are the work of methodical industry. Anthony Trollope was a clerk in the general post-office and his official hours did not begin until ten; and so he got two hours in the morning for writing, and he trained himself to write two hundred and fifty words an hour, rarely falling below this measure. And though his literary production was as regular as a machine, his novels are not lacking in the variety and spontaneity of real life. Readers of the Letters of Sir Walter Scott will remember that

he daily set himself a distinct task and was unhappy unless he accomplished it.

Method will find a place for necessary and important study, and the accumulation of such hours will make a full man, and so a suggestive and instructive pulpit. A few men may not be able to work freely and forcefully under strict laws, but with the majority such laws need never be chains, but a harness with which to do God's work. "The old Dean" (says Guthrie, referring to Dean Milman of St. Paul, the author of "Latin Christianity") "is a pattern to us all. He tells me that he is now seventy-five; that notwithstanding this he is at work every morning at seven o'clock; that such has been the habit of his life; that he counts the morning hours, when the body is recruited by sleep and the mind is fresh, the precious hours of the day for study and acquiring knowledge; and that he owes to them, chiefly, all his acquisitions and his position in life."

Not the least value of true intellectual method is the moral elevation that inseparably attends it. The preacher has made honest use of his powers; he has obeyed the laws of mental life, he has redeemed the time, and he can go to his people with an open face and a pure conscience.

God's Spirit comes into human weakness, and words that seem unworthy may be the very

forms of divine power. But such help is given to faithfulness, never to idleness and shiftlessness. The Holy Spirit is the spirit of truth and thoroughness, not of insincerity. And when a man has been honest with truth and opportunity, with God and himself, there is a girding up of his moral life, a sense of God's favor and presence. He has the happy consciousness of what Lowell calls "work done squarely, and unwasted days."

Method may be a danger; it may become a slavery and not a source of power. But in such cases it will be found that method has become an end and not kept solely as a means. It is worthless to a minister unless it accomplishes the holiest purposes, and the moment it fails of that, something better should take its place. It is good for our pet scheme to be broken in upon by the cry of need, and all truth should make us the more sensitive to the low, sad music of humanity.

Method will be a danger to weak natures, those that are imitators and followers of others. But strong, full natures will be individual in their expression, using the old channels, or making new ones as the need may be.

What shall the method be?

It would be unwise to lay down any rules of method, or any definite scheme of work. It

would likely defeat its own purpose. What would help one man might not be good for another.

But it might be said in general, that the morning hours are the best for work, and that a long morning five times a week should be devoted to Bible study and sermon preparation; that usually the afternoon should be given to pastoral work and outdoor exercise (though you must go to men where you can find them); and that the evenings that are free from church engagements may be used for social duties and special reading.

Whatever be the individual method, certain things should be aimed at by all.

Systematic knowledge of the Bible.

The first hour of the morning so devoted for five days of the week will make men genuine students of the Bible. As a single hour is sometimes only enough to get a good start on any special Bible study, many prefer to take an entire morning. At least some time each week should be devoted to Bible study more general and far-reaching than the issue of next Sunday's sermon. In this way a man can learn to know the Bible, — not as a storehouse of texts, but a history of redemption, the place and influence of its chief characters, the place in the canon, and the peculiar message of each book.

If a man could thus study two books a year (and it is not an unreasonable hope), a score of years would cover the most important parts of the Scriptures. If you cannot do this work in Greek and Hebrew (and most students know hardly more than will help them to understand good commentaries), then by all means do your exegetical work with the English Bible. Professor George F. Moore of Harvard, in his defence of theological education before the International Council of Congregational Churches at Boston, speaks of "a larger exegesis, a broader interpretation and view of inspiration, to which it is clear that that which is really inspired and inspiring in the Scriptures resides in every translation, even in the poorest, not to speak of our own noblest version, as well as in the letter of the Greek and Hebrew." Then do not give up this systematic study of the Bible because you cannot work easily in the original languages.

Do your own thinking. Learn to trust your judgments. Of course, you will have the humility and the scholarly desire to correct and enlarge your views by the use of some of the best helps. And let there be some record of this work, at least so far as putting down the results in a note-book. Daily, while engaged in this study, put down any helpful thought or text for a sermon.

Such work, made a habit, will inevitably make you a full Bible student and your pulpit rich with Bible truth. Your sermons will not be like Gratiano's reasons: "a grain of wheat in a bushel of chaff."

This is not an ambitious plan; it is so simple that any man can follow it with ordinary devotion.

Next to the systematic knowledge of the Bible comes the Religious Thought and Life of the Age.

This means reading in philosophy, theology, ethics, practical movements, and religion. A minister will get much of this in reviews and papers. But he should not be content with these. One strong book in two or three of these related fields of thought can be read each year. But especially as a Christian teacher a man is to know the movement in morals and religion; this much to feel the pulse of the time, and still more to see to it that the church and Christian men are in true alliance with whatever promises larger visions of truth and progress in the betterment of mankind. For a minister to be ignorant of the missionary work of the church, is like a general ignorant of the forces and country that he is commanded to invade. And there is nothing better for a man's heart-life, nothing richer in its materials for inspiring teaching, than the records of modern missions.

And then there should be the study of some department of higher literature for delight and power. You may not have the time to read widely, but you can be the friend of some master mind. That's a fine rule of Dr. Hale's: "Try every day to hold converse with some stronger and nobler life than yourself." You can easily become familiar (so that characters and scenes shall be like dear friends) with some great novelist, or poet, or historian.

Then you must read sometimes simply to know what other people are feeding upon. Under the general preparation of reading, Dr. Boynton, in "Lectures on Preaching," gives a glimpse into his own study; it was written several years ago: "Just now on my table are three poets: Browning — he is always there; Kipling, with his billowy 'Seven Seas'; Paul Dunbar, the first colored American poet, with his remarkable dialect songs. The novel is 'Quo Vadis,' the latest work of the Polish Sienkiewicz; the history is of Poland; the biography is the life of George Romanes; the theology is two volumes upon God, by Professor Harris of Yale, and 'Moral Evolution,' by Professor Harris of Andover, which has passed to a third reading; the homiletic is Van Dyke's 'Gospel for an Age of Doubt,' and Mr. Nicoll's 'When Worst comes to Worst.'"

After such a suggestive list, you will wish to know how he reads: "One reads, and reads, and reads in such companionship, and finds that he grows. You should devour some books — you will. You should detest some books — you will. And both processes will have homiletic value. The truth is, there are different ways of reading. You read different things for different purposes, and the purpose covers the method. Some books you skim; some you study. In the one case your quest is illustration; in the other, ideas. The first may be a novel; the second, a theology."

Method in study should be a help to method in teaching. The Church year insures an orderly presentation of the great facts and truths of Christianity. And the pulpits that are not bound by a prescribed order should be all the more careful to teach the faith in its breadth and unity, that the life of the Church may be vigorous and expanding. A free pulpit is in danger of being unduly individual and even erratic. The present taste of the preacher may be followed, or what seems a present demand of the community, at the expense of systematic instruction, and so, largeness of life. The desire to attract the fickle mind of this strenuous age, — an age fed on intellectual scraps, — has led to variety and novelty, and so to the loss of

thorough and constructive teaching. And the hope of better teaching is in the orderly mind of the preacher, and in his habits of orderly study.

A thoughtful minister, at the beginning of the year, will map out in large outline the special studies that he will pursue. And this plan will be determined by his past studies and by the need of his church and community, looked at in a generous way. And his studies will find their way into his sermons. Not that the sermon will be about the last book that he has read. Such preaching is subjective and bookish, and not a living word to men. But if the studies are chosen in view of the needs of men and thought out and applied to life, the sermons will command the mind and conscience of the hearers. A young man especially, without large reserves of experience, will need to make his studies contribute directly to his preaching. And all sermons would gain in thoughtfulness and constructive power if they were related to thorough and long-continued study of truth and life.

It is best to make only suggestions as to orderly preaching, not to lay down rules or plan.

The communion seasons may sometimes direct the topics; sermons leading to the choice of Christ; and then sermons on the simple truths of Christian living. The Bible studies should

lead to short courses on books, or doctrines, or duties. Truth is revealed through persons, and the persons of the Bible furnish rich material for interesting and inspiring teaching. Dr. Taylor's "Elijah the Prophet" and "Paul the Missionary" are good examples of the wealth and effectiveness of such material. The Church should not be ignorant of her great leaders, heroes, and saints, and especially of the modern movements in missions and reform and social betterment. Pulpit topics are suggested by timely events, as Bible revision, Creed revision, the Luther anniversary, the Centennial, the spiritual interpretation of the events of the year.

The volumes of the Expositor's Bible are worthy examples of series of sermons on books of the Bible; but they were given to congregations homogeneous in race and training, and would hardly be adapted to the heterogeneous nature of American congregations.

The following lists are suggestive of the systematic instruction and variety of interest and appeal found in the study of two writings: Amos, of the Old Testament, and the Epistle to the Philippians, of the New.

AMOS

i. 9	Forgetting the Brotherly Covenant.
iii. 2	Privilege and Accountability.
v. 13	Is it Prudent to keep Silence?
v. 21–24	Justice before Worship.
vi. 1	A False Ease in Religion.
vi. 4–6	Dangers of Luxury.
vii. 7	God's Plumb-line.
vii. 12–15	God's Prophet not a Professional nor a Hireling.
viii. 4–6	The Sabbath, the Bulwark of the Poor.
ii. 12 viii. 11–12	Suppression of God's Word means Famine of Truth.

PHILIPPIANS

i. 1–11	A Pastor's Noble Prayer for his People.
i. 21–26	The Great Dilemma.
i. 27–30	The Life that befits the Gospel.
ii. 1–11	The Mind of Christ.
ii. 12–18	Working out Salvation.
ii. 19–30	The Mirror of Friendship.
iii. 1–13	Paul's Master Passion.
iii. 17–21	Citizenship in Heaven.
iv. 1–3	The Book of Life.
iv. 4–7	Joy and Peace.
iv. 8–9	Think and Act.
iv. 10–13	The Greatest Secret in the World.
iv. 14–19	The Fruit of Christian Generosity.
iv. 21–23	Sainthood in a Palace.

Phillips Brooks suggests the only danger of courses of sermons: "The system of long courses is apt to secure proportion at too great an expense of spontaneity. The only sure means of securing the result is orderliness in the preacher's mind; the grasp of Christian truth as a system, and of the Christian life as a steady movement of the whole nature through Christ to the Father."

And elsewhere he speaks golden words about the whole question of method:

"Make your own methods. Be truly independent. Do what is best for you."

"Be sure that methods come out of your own nature, and are not the result of mere accident. Let them be intelligent and governed by reason."

"Let them be noble, for large ideals and sacred purposes, and not minute conveniences."

"Let them be broad, — not narrow and minute, —with plenty of room to fill out and grow."

I am sure that we need more concentration in our study. Some of us are strangers to close, continuous thinking. We need some of Socrates' power of absorption in thought. Such concentration is stimulating to all the powers of mind. It produces more and of a higher order.

Edward Everett Hale has told preachers that

they waste time in spending two or three mornings in the work of writing the sermon, a work that could be better done in as many hours.

In closing I would make two simple but very practical suggestions.

Finish the work begun. Some studies are full of half-finished work, in every direction. We need the discipline and power of completion. And this applies especially to the sermon. The work may be hard, — you may be dissatisfied, — but work on to the end. It is far more likely to be the Word of God, than something chosen at the last moment.

Do not crowd the work into the end of the week, writing into the early hours of the Sabbath. Some examples have set the wrong fashion. Lyman Beecher wrote with fury Sunday morning until the last church bell began to ring, and was waylaid at the door of his study by some member of his family lest he should hasten into the pulpit in his study gown and slippers. Dr. Parkhurst has said that his own method is only a warning to young men. In some men a fervor is born of such preparation. But the most of us need the assurance of work thoroughly done, and the expression of a body rested and quickly responsive to the immortal spirit within.

VI

THE SPIRITUAL LIFE OF THE PREACHER

OUTLINE

The Nature of the Spiritual Life.
- Identified with Mysticism.
  - The strength and weakness of Mysticism.
- Identified with Pietism.
  - The use of feeling in religion.
- Identified with Asceticism.
  - Self-denial an abiding principle of Christianity. Its highest expression in permeation, not in separation.
- The Spiritual Life is a rational state; a life governed by the mind and spirit of Christ.

The Characteristics of a Spiritual Ministry.
- Sincerity. Relation to changing views of doctrine.
- Mental and spiritual unselfishness.
  - The special dangers of intellectual pride.
  - The possible narrowness of devotion.
- Humility. Temptation to vanity and the dogmatic spirit.
- Cheerfulness and Gravity.
  - Cause and cure of depression.
  - The abuse and power of humor.
- Patience.
  - The twin elements of hope and endurance.

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VI

THE SPIRITUAL LIFE OF THE PREACHER

It should be said at the outset that the separation of our life into the intellectual and the spiritual is a matter of thought and not of life. The spiritual life is to rule the entire man. "Religion is not a department of life, it is a standard by which all life is to be measured, a principle by which all life is to be governed, a spirit by which all life is to be imbued." Moses Stuart's exegetical study of the Bible was in the highest degree spiritual and devotional. Daniel, with the care of an empire on his shoulders, prayed three times a day, with his windows open towards Jerusalem. In both lives there was no artificial separation between the sacred and the secular, the spiritual and the material. The relation of the soul to God rules the whole life.

What is spirituality — a spiritual life?

Spirituality and the spiritual life are terms in constant use, but are not thereby free from

vagueness and a certain unreality and even misconception. It is not threshing over old straw to ask, what is a spiritual life?

It is often identified with mysticism, but it may be something else, and is always more than mysticism. Many of the mystics have been men of the loftiest spirituality, but it is a partial truth to say with the mystics: "Religion is not a series of notions or practices, but an inner life. Correct views of truth do not insure the humble walk. Knowledge and zeal are not the greatest things in the world. God and the soul cannot be put into the postulates of reason. Mystery wraps the holy of holies. But we can trust the imperishable sense of God in the soul. We can honor conscience as our King. We can reach forth our lame hands of faith, and call to Him whom we believe to be the Lord of all."

It is the soul hungry after God that thus speaks, feeling the eternal mystery of being, and seeking to be real through it all.

And the spirit of mysticism has spoken through great reformations, in eras of spiritual progress, and striven for deeper and more abiding realities. God is too transcendent to be put into a mere definition. Religion is life as well as creed, and the life of religion is the breath of the divine spirit, it is the impartation of the Spirit of God.

"Closer is He than breathing, and nearer than hands and feet."

And who has not felt a natural impatience — it is peculiar to young men — with the form of life, and would reach out and touch the person! Rites and churches and creed, yes, and the Bible itself, are only helps to this closer and vital life of the soul in God.

"Beyond the sacred page
I seek Thee, Lord:
My spirit pants for Thee,
O Living Word."

So there is truth in mysticism. The noblest teachers of the spiritual life, from Paul to Phillips Brooks, have had an element of mysticism. The dry, hard statement of truth without a sense of the encompassing and indwelling life is scholasticism and spiritual dearth.

But the weakness and danger of mysticism is the scorn of means in the search for spiritual life, and the undue trust in the moral and religious feelings that have more than once led to fanaticism and even to practical denial. God not only touches every soul that comes into the world, but He has incarnated His life. He has put before us in clear, definite form His life and our true life in Jesus Christ. He has given us an objective expression of spiritual truth. And

so, not in dim spiritual impressions, partaking of the imperfections of the human heart, but upon the growing perception of God in Christ, depends our spiritual life.

"The new state of feeling into which the Christian enters clings to something richer than itself. It needs an objective reality, which it distinguishes from its own nature. Greater and higher than all religious emotion within the Christian, there rises and towers religious thought, which points away beyond all that we have already felt and experienced, on to a boundless wealth which lies beyond. — HERMAN.

Spirituality is often identified with pietism. But it is more than the condition of feeling which is technically called religious. It is not in the exercises and states of heart that are popularly called "enjoyment of religion." It does not depend upon the unction with which pious words are spoken, or the feelings that outflow in song and exhortation.

When I say that pietism is not to be identified with spirituality, I do not mean to ignore the feelings in religion. The great heart is always the source of strength. We ought to put more heart into our worship and into our service. Truth is powerless until it touches the affections and will. "He shall baptize you with fire" is the prophecy, symbol of that God-breathed pas-

sion, that abiding enthusiasm that quickens and utilizes life in holy service. But there is an emotional religion that never takes hold of the deep things of truth and character, that has no strong intellectual grasp in it, and so is transient and variable as the moods of men; that has no breadth of knowledge in it, and so is often narrow and pernicious in its influence; that does not ally itself with conscience, and so does little to purify life and establish righteousness. A true, abiding enthusiasm is born and sustained of a clear, rational vision.

Spirituality is often identified with asceticism. But true spirituality keeps self-denial as a means, not an end; it holds that there is no virtue in self-denial itself, any more than in luxury. It is not ascetic in body or mind. It is neither monkish, nor puritanic. Its senses are not dull to the beauty of the world. Its heart is not steeled against the kinship of nature and human life, against recreations that lift the burden from the back, and the joys that brighten and sweeten society. Perhaps there is little need for this caution. The modern Church is not in special danger of the ascetic spirit. We ought to honor the heroism that could turn from home and mother to rocky dens and caves of the earth, the unflinching allegiance to conviction that built godly homes in the

wilderness. The monk was a protest, and the Puritan had stern work to do in the day of the Lord. Each age has its peculiar mission, its special message to emphasize. Separation has been more than once the providential work of the past, and it will always be an element of a spiritual Church. "Come out, and be ye separate" is an abiding principle of Christianity. But is not ours a still higher work, as it is more difficult — that of permeation? The vital truth of the cross can never cease. Christ has not been crucified for us until He becomes the law of life in us. If we know not the spirit of self-sacrifice, we have not learned the first letter of the Christian alphabet. "He who does not know what self-sacrifice means," says General Armstrong, "is most to be pitied; for he is a heathen, he doesn't know anything of God." But he adds, "What men commonly count self-sacrifice is simply the noblest way of using one's powers." Is it not the providential mission of our time to carry this spirit into every part of man's nature and every province of man's life?

Let us not say this act is religious, and this is secular. Let us make all things sacred that God has given, and call nothing profane. What God has cleansed, that we cannot call common and unclean. This is God's world, and not the

devil's. The earth and human life were made sacred by Christ's becoming a man and living here. This is the truth of Christianity that glorifies this home of ours, and shall build the New Jerusalem.

"All our senses, and tastes, and faculties were made to enjoy God's gifts and glorify Him in their use. Summer fields and summer skies speak heaven's harmony, and say to us that they have a message to every open heart from the King in His beauty. And the men and women about us cry through dim and misty strivings! — we can live; we can worship; we have God's spirit within; teach us how to discern and obey this spirit. All the world generations have but one voice. How can we become one? At harmony with God, and God's universe?" — KINGSLEY.

In the distinctions that I have thus tried to make in the different manifestations of what the world has regarded as spirituality, I have already drawn, by inference, what seem to me the elements of the spiritual life. Not mysticism, though mysticism may never be separate from its loftiest attainment. Not pietism, though the most ecstatic fervor is born of it. Not asceticism, though the highest test of it may be in the willing self-abnegation. Spirituality is not primarily nor essentially an emo-

tional state, though the mightiest passion beats in it.

It is, first of all, a rational state, a mental life. It is called in the Scriptures "heavenly mindedness," "the mind of the Spirit," and "the mind of Christ." It begins in belief in Jesus Christ, the reason accepting the evidences, the affections thrilling their response, the will yielding its choice, — the whole man turning to Christ.

Spirituality then means a way of looking at life and duty, — God and the world; a definite and determined course of life. It is connecting everything with the will of God, as that is made known in the person of Christ. It may be called the open vision of God, the daily conviction and conception of His presence, — His Fatherhood and authority, living under the power of His "moral majesty and eternal compassion." It is the glad and loyal friendship with Christ; it is the constant recognition of man's worth in the light of Bethlehem and Calvary.

The man who rejoices in the light as God's greeting, who bears loss as the pressure of the Father's hand, to make us conscious of Himself, who takes duty whatever its seeming place or reward as of immeasurable import, because God-sent; the man who sets Christ ever before

his face, aspiring after His perfection, striving to love what He loves, and hate what He hates; the man who is free from disdain and exclusiveness, who recognizes every one, however despised by others, a social outcast or a naked savage, as a possible child of God,—that man lives a spiritual life.

This is the conception of the spiritual life in the light of the New Testament and of Christian history.

Such being the nature of the spiritual life, we should ask ourselves: "What are *the characteristics* of a true *spiritual teacher?* What sort of a man does the best Christian life expect the preacher to be? The world is sensitive to the power of a spiritual life. Men open their hearts to such a preacher, listen to him, trust him, follow him; a man who is pervaded by heavenly motives, whose love seeks men however unlovely, whose joy is to serve: such a preacher will find the hearts of men all about him, and he will win a large place for his Master.

If the church complains of small congregations, it is a sign in part of the diminished vitality of the pulpit. Wherever God's word is spoken, men will go to hear it. But it must be a living word, not a dull repetition of yesterday's; the truth of God fresh and warm and pulsating through present life. If God is to

speak through us, we must be open to Him. "If thou wilt separate the precious from the vile, then thy mouth shall be as my mouth, saith the Lord." To be a man spiritually minded, love-constrained, this is back of all the conditions of power.

The first quality of the truly spiritual preacher is *sincerity*. Some minds, independent and original minds, pass through painful experiences of doubt and conflict. They go to their work from the training of the schools, and the contact with men and the complex passions and problems of life suggest difficulties not felt in seminary days. They must examine questions anew; they must give themselves to independent study of the Scriptures; they must work their own way along the path of truth, however uncertain the step, and at whatever personal cost. Now what shall the minister do in such states of mind? The man who first and last is an ecclesiastic more than a seeker of truth, will say that such a man has no right in the ministry: he must have all his beliefs fixed before thinking of the teaching of others. I cannot agree with the answer. I should be untrue to God's dealings with many noble and useful servants if I did. You are in His work, and you would not be anywhere else.

You can meet the difficulties manfully by

prayer and study. You can teach the simplest, most essential truths that you have already found precious. And you can teach more only as fast as you have found out more. The Spirit will certainly lead you into the truth, and a larger faith you will find your own. I mention this possible experience to urge you to abhor all mere officialism. Let words stand for things. Do not exaggerate your own experiences. Be honest with God and with yourselves. Rise above slavish imitation, let but one be your Master; speak the message that He gives you, and men will learn to trust you, and bring their own experiences to you, and receive God's word at your mouth.

A second element of character to be aimed at is *mental* and *spiritual unselfishness*. It is the spirit of Christ, who came not to be ministered unto but to minister. It is the spirit that devotes self without reserve, without ambitious thought of the future, to the soul-good of men. I have called it mental unselfishness, for in the intellectual life of ministers is the frequent temptation, under the plea of a great and holy work, to be essentially lovers of themselves.

There are great intellectual demands made upon the ministry. The tranquil, domestic, and social character of his life, bringing the natural temptation to indolence, must be re-

sisted. A manly spirit of self-sacrifice must be kept up. He will often need to study when other men are asleep or engaged in pleasant recreation. Great books must pass like iron atoms of the blood into his mental constitution. A virile ministry is demanded, that shall lay strong grasp upon the reason and conscience of men, as well as touch their emotions. Such a ministry must be in the "strenuous and perpetual process of an ever increasing growth."

An intellectual pride is easily engendered, the exclusive tastes of a cultivated class. And so the minister follows his tastes and seeks companionship in his books, or among the people who love the books and tastes that he loves. The people are regarded as common and vulgar. When he preaches to them, he preaches down to them, and touches them at arm's length. He fails, through his intellectual selfishness, to have that profound respect for man as man, that speaks in every act of our Lord, and pervades the Scriptures.

He regards truth to be pursued for itself, without immediate regard to its effect upon men. So he is interested in books more than in lives; in theories and speculations about the truth, rather than in truth as the food of life. Every truth of revelation has its practical bearing,

and a system of truth that cannot be preached with the purpose of quickening and comforting and purifying men is not the truth of God's word, but the speculations of the study.

You must have your hours of study, and you guard them jealously; quiet, unbroken hours they must be: you turn the key of the study door even against wife and children. It takes time to follow the subtle trains of thought through a chapter of the Epistles. It takes time to have an inspiring word grow into its full sermonic form; and you have an intellectual pride in the fidelity, in the finish of your work. Your reputation is at stake, and your advancement among men. With this true idea of study and sermon work, yet over it and mastering it the principle, "The man that wants to see me is the man I want to see," demands a high degree of mental unselfishness. To hear the stammering story of some poor woman, to answer the cry of distress, patiently to stop to answer the doubts of some troubled spirit, to have the best hours for study cut in pieces, is hard indeed — it takes a soul that is constrained by Christ-love.

"If you can meet such interruptions gallantly," says the late Bishop F. D. Huntington, "nay, more, if you can pass from your books and writing table to a poor woman, crying out

of the coasts of her Tyre on your parish circuit, with anything like the look or tone of Him who stopped and listened whenever Jew or Gentile beggar besought Him, you will be quite as certain to appear among His priests and kings hereafter, as if you had finished out your happy train of thought in the handsomest fashion, and gruffly told the perplexed parishioner at your door to go away and come again at a more convenient season." [1]

Spiritual unselfishness was named, though the union of the two words may seem anything but happy; unselfish spirit in direct Christian work. And temptation to selfishness here is in the pathway of what seems an essential condition of success.

A man must have decision of character, give himself to his ministry with consecration, make it his specialty. He must do more than this in a general way: he must concentrate himself upon his single field; say, this one thing I do. And here comes the subtle temptation which every minister feels, to a personal and selfish use of spiritual power. Devotion may be blind and exclusive. The spirit of loyalty may not be wholly free from the spirit of idolatry. The attitude may be critical and unsympathetic towards other ministers and churches, and

[1] "Personal Christian Life in the Ministry," p. 65.

activity influenced by worldly competition. The great thing may be my ministry and my church. And zeal for a holy cause insensibly dwindles into zeal for self.

To be known among men as an unselfish man, a true minister of Jesus Christ, to seek men not for what they have or may bring to us of honor or reputation, but for their own good, to do all things for the Gospel's sake, this is to have the element of spiritual power, this is to be a witness for the truth.

Then *humility* cannot be omitted from the essential qualities of the true preacher. It is opposed to vanity and self-seeking, improper self-assertion and dogmatism. No class are more tempted to vanity than ministers. In common with other professions that have to do with public audiences, there comes to be a fascination in speech, a joy in the conscious mastery over the minds of others, a watching for their interest and appreciation, that easily grows into a false pride.

"But an hour ago a thousand people hung swaying upon the breath that went forth from between his lips; their upturned faces offered him that most exquisite of flatteries, the reverence of a great audience for an orator who has mastered them. We should remember that the religious orator stands, both in privilege and in

peril, apart from his kind. He may suffer at once the most subtle of human dangers, and the deepest of human joys." [1]

What young minister has wholly escaped the temptation? The people praise him for the qualities of his sermons, and for the hope they see in them. It feeds his vanity and he soon grows restless without applause. The love of praise soon passes into a love of power. And then, farewell to the simplicity and openness of his spirit! There is no longer the lowly mind of his Master. He becomes a church manager and politician. He is dogmatic in his preaching and conversation, brooking no opposition to his plans, intolerant of differences of opinion. Where is the gentleness of the great Apostle among men — cherishing them even as a nurse cherisheth her children!

The minister should have the spirit but not the ill manners of Dr. Kirk, of Boston, who said to the effusive praise of the morning sermon, "Oh, yes, the devil told me that before I left the pulpit."

That was a fine satire of Henry Ward Beecher's at the Herbert Spencer dinner. To a great company of scientific men, Mr. Beecher appealed to conscience, faith, hope, love in men, divine in

[1] Mrs. Elizabeth Phelps Ward, "A Singular Life," p. 274.

nature and in origin. Dr. Abbott calls it one of his great triumphs. A well-known man went up and reached out both hands to congratulate him, and said with something of a patronizing tone, "You're the greatest man in the world, Mr. Beecher." "You forget yourself," was the quick reply. There must be a loss of self in all true service. No man ever preached well who was truly thinking how well he preached. "The harp of the minstrel," says Ruskin, "is untruly touched if his own glory is all that it records. The power of the masters is shown by their self-annihilation."

The spiritual preacher should be marked by *cheerfulness* and *gravity*. I put them together as Phillips Brooks did, because they make the balance of an earnest and Christian temper. Cheerfulness is first, for there are many temptations in the ministry to depression. And too many ministers yield to depression, and talk too much about their trials, and think not enough about their mercies. As a body they have even given to the world the impression of melancholy. Galton in his "Hereditary Genius" speaks of "the gently complaining spirit as characteristic of the Protestant clergy." It must be admitted the temptations to depression are great. He feels the burdens of souls, the sins of the world. It is no wonder that the

world seems to him robed in sackcloth, — the race like one great hospital.

And the minister is more sensitive than the average man by virtue of the nature that has called him to the ministry. He has the artistic nature; his work is in the emotions. The heights of vision and feeling have their heavy price in despondency.

There are peculiar trials in the ministry that touch a sensitive nature, — small salary, narrow means, fine and pure tastes to be constantly denied: the very tools for the best work often beyond his reach. If there is anything that rasps and frets a sensitive nature it is this. He comes to hate the very name and sight of money. "That he may be free from worldly cares," etc., is the wording of the call put into his hands, and yet from the first day of his ministry until the sod is placed over him — except by the special grace of God — he may never be free from worldly cares.

"Such are the discouragements of a genuine cross-bearing ministry that, without the Master's genuine spirit of self-sacrifice, sooner or later the dilettante pulpiteer will throw off the burden and begin to seek his ease, or else preach for itching ears of phonographic reporters. It will require no very strenuous nor heroic spirit to go acceptably enough through most of your

public services; but it is hard to toil without visible returns; to see your most sacred endeavors coarsely handled; to find spiritual things profanely criticised; to spend wretched hours cheerfully, among ignorant, unclean, petulant, gossiping, weak-minded people." Nothing that I know of will carry one graciously and gladly through that but the Christ in the heart. And the Christ in the heart should lift one out of the weakness of despondency and morbid sensitiveness, and sustain a cheerful, hopeful, joyous manhood. You are to carry good cheer to men; you are the messenger of glad tidings. You cannot lift men up, you cannot inspire and lead them to better things, without this element of cheer and hope.

"Why do you judge life by its lowest phase," said Professor David Swing of Chicago to a young minister of a neighboring church, "or measure faith by its low-water mark of depression? If I lose faith in men in one hour in the twenty-four, in the twenty-three hours of faith I will do my work for humanity."

With cheerfulness I have put gravity; "opposed equally to pompous solemnity and irreverent levity, to the clerical prig and the clerical buffoon." There are men who think the secret of social power is in being a "good fellow," who are always joking, telling funny

stories, turning every great opportunity of life to wit. Humor has its happy service in the pulpit. The preacher should always be himself. But a pulpit wit is dangerously near to moral weakness. Dignity that is not natural, that is not the instinctive defence of the sacredness of personality, that is not the manner of an earnest, thoughtful, sincere character, is not worth the name. I make no plea for dignity. Let dignity take care of itself. I simply plead for a Christian manhood that feels itself too high and noble to trifle with life and opportunity. I simply plead for a gravity that means "that grave and serious way of looking at life which, while it never repels the true light-heartedness of pure and trustful hearts, welcomes into a manifest sympathy the souls of men who are oppressed and burdened, anxious and full of questions which, for the time at least, have banished all laughter from their faces."

Patience cannot be omitted from the ideal of a spiritual ministry. It is well to remember that the word translated patience in the New Testament is sometimes rendered hope in the Septuagint, and sometimes endurance. The patience that holds us to our tasks and sustains us under burden and trial is made of these two strands — hope and endurance.

We are never to give up hope for ourselves or

our friends. We are to believe in the larger life and the nobler future. We must work with this vision ever before our eyes; fight as those who hear the shout of those that triumph.

> "Do thou fulfil thy work but as yon wild-fowl do,
> Thou wilt heed no less the wailing,
> Yet hear through it angels singing."

What if men all about us say, "Who will show us any good?" We will turn to God and have the light of His countenance upon us.

If we have hope in our hearts — the joy and courage that hope gives, we shall have the grace of endurance. We shall hold on and continue in our place and work. We shall labor and faint not.

A weakness of the ministry is its impatience, impatience with self and with others and our work. We wish to sow the seed and reap the harvest, to lay the foundations, and put the cap-stone on before our sun goes down.

So many men are unwilling to stay where they are the most needed, or until they can make any appreciable addition to the Kingdom of God. They have their hands to their ears that they may not fail to hear the first call to a larger field, and they even besiege the doors of every vacant pulpit.

A spiritual man will have the hope to labor

on whatever the odds against him, or the hardship of his lot, if he feels that God has given him his place and work. I do not see how a man dare take the reins of his life into his own hands, who believes in God.

I once went into the observatory of Hamilton College to look at some maps which Dr. Peters had been making of the stars. For thirty years, through all the weary days and shining nights, he had been untiring at this work, and had succeeded in penning a little corner of the starry heavens. "How long will it take you to finish your work?" I innocently asked him, and a strange light came into his face and a far-away look into his eyes as he replied: "Oh, about two hundred years!" He never stopped to think that one short lifetime would be all too short to more than make a beginning of the hosts of heaven. He worked on as though all the years of God were his.

If this be the patience of the man of science (and it is not an uncommon virtue), whose faith is none too certain, the world has the right to expect at least an equal patience of those who labor in an everlasting Kingdom, and in the presence of a living and reigning Lord.

VII

THE METHOD OF THE SPIRITUAL LIFE

OUTLINE

Maintaining the Spiritual Life.
- Spiritual sensibility the condition of spiritual life.
- The very work of the ministry helpful to the spiritual life.
- The professional spirit fatal to spiritual sensibility.
- Testimony of Chalmers, Maurice, Robertson, Dale.
- Relation of sincerity to spiritual work.
- Time for the cultivation of the spiritual life.

Ways of Maintaining the Spiritual Life.
- Devotional study of the Bible.
- The habit of daily prayer.
- The power of meditation.
- The influence of nature.
- Christian labor, not efforts at self-culture.
- The simple matter of daily duty.

The Special Methods of modern times.
- Tendency to special methods.
  - "Sinless perfection."
  - "The Higher Life."
  - "The Holy Spirit for power."
- The limitation of such methods.
- The preacher under the laws of the common Christian life.

The influence of Spirituality in preaching.
- It gives mental sanity.
- Sustains a holy enthusiasm.

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VII

THE METHOD OF THE SPIRITUAL LIFE

To be men in spiritual life is the word of highest importance for the pulpit. Here we come to the climax of the discussion of the personality of the preacher. The spiritual life — it is the source and sphere of our real manhood, up into which we are to take and render of holy use every physical and mental power.

We have found that a spiritual life is the attitude of the soul toward God and toward man. It is the open, sensitive spirit towards God, the vivid sense that we live in His presence, the habit of referring everything to Him, and the making of His will for us the law and impulse of our lives. And towards man it is the fellow-feeling, the yearning after their good, the giving of self for their help.

How shall we sustain the spiritual life?

It comes from something deeper than formal orthodoxy and churchly attachment. It cannot be gained by the most rigid adherence to the forms of sound doctrine, or the most strenu-

ous devotion to the mere externals of religion. It is spirit and not form. It is the sacred inner life of the soul.

First of all the preacher is to maintain a spiritual sensibility, to keep the spiritual senses keen and true and open. This means open to the truth and the moral life of men, — the quickest to see and feel truth, to see and feel evil. We must be open to the truth in whatever way God may bring it to us. Our spiritual desire must be kept strong for larger visions of the truth, and so fuller measures of God's spirit. Some men receive the truth not as a part of their life, but as accepted opinion. They do not make it theirs by prayerful study and obedience, and so grow into desire for the truth, and power to apprehend it. Doctrine encloses them like the shells of crustacea, and no other messages of God can get to them. We are to be living souls, and that means growing souls, and not petrifactions.

The whole work of the ministry should help the spiritual life. No class of men have such helps as we. In our studies we are constantly engaged upon the most vital problems of living. Mind and heart are fed. The minister should grow to the largest and best man of which he is capable. If a shoemaker who is pounding pegs into a shoe heel all day long, or a laundry

man who has nothing to occupy his thoughts but the ironing of two thousand collars a day through a series of years, if a lawyer who deals with the tricks and evasions of the human mind, a doctor who touches the diseases of the race, often connected with secret sins, — if such a man does not grow by his work purer in his purpose and more elevated and unselfish, we feel no surprise. The spiritual helps must be carried into his work. He gets no help from himself, from what he does. And sometimes such men from the dire necessity of their soul-life are driven to God and show finer examples of spiritual living than the favored sons of religion. A New York clergyman has told of a street-car conductor, who by shifts in his runs was kept away from home from four in the morning until seven at night, and who got up at half-past three that he might have the few moments of quiet Bible study and prayer.

How shall our work sustain the spiritual life? That will depend upon the spirit with which we do our work, and not on the work itself.

It is a most real temptation — the dulling of spiritual sensibility. Men become careless and callous by handling sacred things. How many times after the services of God's house are over must a man — if he honestly thinks of it — convict himself of the professional and per-

functory spirit! He has not realized God's presence. He has not had living and vivid conceptions of the truth he has spoken. He has asked and he has not desired. He is busy in many directions of parish management, and becomes skilled in the details of work, and is satisfied with skill in the place of spiritual power.

In the routine of work there is no little danger of self-deception, of exaggeration of spiritual experience. We talk about truth, or urge others to duties and we take it for granted that we do the things ourselves.

"I have reason to pray and to strive," writes Chalmers, "lest the busy routine of operations should altogether secularize me. It is a withering world, a dry and thirsty land where no water is, a place of exile from the fountain of life and light that is laid up in the Divinity."

"There are temperaments naturally gifted with clear insight and delicately sensitive to the bearings of conduct, who can speak unerringly concerning the temptations, danger, and aids of living, but whose lives seem none the better. Such a character is likely to develop special weakness of will, for there is positive injury in clear insights that are not obeyed; the whole character is cankered by this persistent failure to live according to one's best light, and becomes hollow and hypocritical.

There is danger, at least, that the proverb which Paulsen quotes shall prove true: 'The man who rings the bell cannot march in the procession.'" [1]

The noblest souls always feel the danger of the loss of spiritual sensibility and strive against it. That is a keen criticism of George Eliot's on the eminent preacher of Birmingham, Mr. George Dawson: "I imagine that it is his fortune, or rather misfortune, to have talked too much and too early about the greatest things."

Robertson always feared the subtle fascination there was in an audience, — the intoxication of power over others, — and by the most searching self-examination brought his own life to face the truths he had so readily presented to others.

A letter which Dr. Dale wrote from Heidelberg may have a touch of morbidness from ill health, but puts the truth in a way we cannot forget: "Preaching constantly enfeebles rather than strengthens, I fear, the real power of the religious affections and the authority of the conscience and the divine law; and it is a wretched thing to be always conscious that even one's own conceptions of what life ought to be are not attained. More quiet for thought and communion with God are indispensable."

[1] King, "Rational Living."

"Is there no danger," asks Maurice, "that we shall play with the most dreadful words as if they were counters, shall use the names of heaven and hell and God Himself, as if they were mere instruments of trade? Is there no danger that there shall be nothing answering in our acts to our words, that we shall be more grovelling than ordinary men in one, in proportion as we are more magnificent in another?"

Spiritual callousness through routine accounts for the professionalism into which the minister comes. There are certain drawbacks into which the ministry as a class are brought. There is at times an invisible but real barrier raised between the people and the minister. "Men, women, and parsons," the threefold division of humanity, alas has some truth in it. A company of well-meaning people out for a holiday were seeking an empty compartment in a Scotch railway train. "Here are seats," cried one, but when a clerical garb appeared in the centre of it, they instinctively passed on to seek other places.

The people themselves will sometimes turn the most spontaneous human service into a formal, professional thing, by saying, "Oh! that's his business." And when this natural tendency to professionalism in popular thought is increased by a lack of sensitiveness on the

part of the minister (the very secret in him of professionalism), it becomes a deadly thing.

Take the sensitiveness to the sins and sufferings of the people. You cannot get used to the shame or dreadfulness of it as a doctor may. You must not find relief in the very routine of your profession as he may. "The most tender-hearted doctor learns to suppress his sympathies for the sake of his work. A surgeon cannot afford to have nerves; he grows efficient as he is able to operate mechanically, without regard for the pain that it is his duty to inflict.

"But take the case of a minister who has to listen to confessions of sin, such as come uninvited to every good shepherd of souls. No task is more repulsive, and it must never grow less repulsive. You dare not let familiarity with the details of moral disease dull and deaden your hatred of what is of itself wrong. Whatever skill you may gain to deal with such a case, will be in exact proportion to your delicate conscience and your keen, passionate sensibility to evil. If you once come to look at sin in a merely professional light, you will have lost your power as a spiritual guide." [1]

How shall we keep ourselves from the deadening effect of routine? How shall we keep ourselves sensitive to the heavenly influence, to

[1] "Clerical Life," p. 134.

the significance of our work, and to the power of the truth we declare?

The spirit that will transform all work into spiritual power is sincerity. Not asking what will pay, but what is true. Not, what will others think, but what do they need. Not being governed by convenience, and policy, and expediency, but having such a faith in God, that we shall seek to know and do His truth and nothing else. Sincerity will always seek the personal application of the truth. We shall preach to ourselves as well as others. Like the Jewish priest we shall offer sacrifices first for self. What has this truth for me? Am I willing to be all that this truth is fitted to make me? What are the tendencies and laws and habits of my nature that prevent the action of God's Spirit in transforming truth into life in my case? Such truthfulness will make the soul a sensitive plate on which our very work, touching as it does the sources and materials of the spiritual life, will place the impress of God and His Kingdom of Grace.

And such honest application of the truth, as we study, and prepare our message, and get ready for our part in the worship of God's house, will make the soul very sensitive. The soul will lie open in its own deep need, and a reality will be given to words and acts of worship,

and the truth that feeds men will feed the preacher.

Then we must take time to cultivate the spiritual life. The age is weak on the contemplative side. The sharp competitions, the intellectual and social ambitions, even the religious activities, may satisfy us with doing rather than with being, with conventionalities in the place of spirit. They sometimes rob us of God and self. They have taken away something of the soul-quiet and the soul-joy. The minister, above all men, must have moments of silence, of separation from men, when he feels the fresh dew on the pages of the Word, and hears the gracious whisper of God in the closet. Spiritual sensibility and power come from moments of devout retreat, from conscious and eager communion with God, from devout meditation on the revelations of God, above all from the loving and adoring gaze upon the face of the Christ. The man who rarely is alone, who rarely salutes himself and sees what his soul doth love, who is always in the full sight and hearing of the world, can have no profound thought, cannot be deepened and purified and strengthened from the unseen springs of life. "You have to be busy men, with many distractions, with time not your own; and yet, if you are to be anything, there is one thing you must secure. You must

have time to enter into your own heart, and be quiet, you must learn to collect yourselves, to be alone with yourselves, alone with your own thoughts, alone with eternal realities which are behind the rush and confusion of moral things, alone with God. You must learn to shut your door on all your energy, on all your interests, on your hopes and fears and cares, and in the silence of your chamber to possess your soul. You must learn to look below the surface; to sow the seed which you will never reap; to hear loud voices against you, or seducive ones, and to find in your own heart the assurance and the spell which makes them vain. Whatever you do, part not with the inner sacred life of the soul, whereby we live within to things not seen, to Christ and truth and immortality." — Dean Church.

The cultivation of the spiritual life means:

The devotional study of the Bible. All we do to master the books, their place, history, persons, teachings, is food for the spiritual life. It is a false issue to array devotional study against critical. A true exegesis need never be anything else than a spiritual help. But there is a study of the Bible that is more personal, that takes those parts where there is the fullest revelation of God and the soul's duty and privilege, that seeks thereby to have the

sense of God made more mastering and gain the inspiration for duty. The spiritual power of men does not depend strictly upon their scholarly knowledge of the Scriptures and Biblical literature. Some men know less and believe less, but what they hold they hold vividly. The Lord is ever before their face. Here is where so-called devotional reading has its chief value, — to revive our consciousness of God, and bring daily upon the soul the heavenly sanctions and inspirations to holy living.

It is more helpful to take a single truth and dwell upon it until it becomes food — a part of our spiritual culture.

And the thought of some prophetic soul upon Bible truth may be as truly food as our reading of Scripture. The devout classics may be put only second to the Bible. And in the list of devout classics should be found the great poems or essays that deal with the problems of the soul, and give the divine interpretation to nature and human experience. Browning's "Saul" has sustained more than one life when the lamp of faith burned low. "And Tennyson is become as one of the prophets, a witness for God and for immortality."

The habit of daily prayer.

It is not a matter for one to lay down rules for another. We want prayer genuine and

spontaneous. There are no barriers between the soul and God but sin, and the fellowship may never be broken, the desire may reach God anywhere and at any time. In the picture of the New Jerusalem there is no temple, — all life will be fellowship, and all service worship. But we shall be best fitted for the life of the untempled City of God by scrupulous fidelity to the habit of worship now. "It is not safe to leave the matter to the disposal of a planless sentiment. When we have prayed a deliberate and, if you please, formal prayer in the morning, we shall be far more likely to have a thought slipping Godwards from time to time, in the push and distractions of our work, than if the day begins without some such formal devotement of ourselves before Him. It is easy to ridicule the formality of it, but the chances all are that you will have nothing better than that without that. There is peril in cutting loose from the habitual and stated. Disposition needs training. Character is impulse that has been reined down into steady continuance. Set times for meeting God help develop in us set times for wanting to meet him." — PARKHURST.

Take the work we have to do, — worthless without the ceaseless aid of the Holy Spirit, — and the argument for habit in prayer is unanswerable.

The soul-quiet, the separation from the world, means time for meditation. Meditation is not revery, that sweet doing-nothing of thought. It means definite thought, plan, concentration of mind. It is the long and earnest brooding of thought, the strong and steady grasp of ideas, holding them up in their relations and their sweep, holding them before the mind until they become vivid, all-possessing realities. "All profound and authentic power, intellectual or imaginative, moral or spiritual, is rooted in attention." The "wise passiveness" of Wordsworth, by which he meant profound and persistent attention of thought and will, was the source of his personal spiritual commerce with nature.

"There is no substitute for meditation. It is the most invigorating of heart tonics. And the stimulation is not quickly spent. It is not like a spur; it is more like blood transfused, or like a medicine which is also a food. The aspirant for the highest life must 'think on these things.' If he does, he will find, in thinking of them, a zest which increases with familiarity. Rare and beautiful is the grace of unswerving steadiness of soul. Mr. Greatheart is needed in every company that goes on pilgrimage. Reflection on the highest certainties is what keeps the courage high and the spirit

serene. Affliction is light and works a weight of glory; we faint not though our outward man perish, providing we look at the things which are not seen. This was Christ's own way. For the joy set before Him, he endured the cross, and so we are to look unto Him. A firm and quiet spirit will surely be the ornament of an attentive and thoughtful mind." [1]

"To get at the heart of books," says Hamilton Mabie, "we must live with and in them; we must make them our constant companions; we must turn them over and over in thought, slowly penetrating their inmost meaning; and when we possess their thought we must work it into our own thought. The reading of a real book ought to be an event in one's history; it ought to enlarge the vision, deepen the base of conviction, and add to the reader whatever knowledge, insight, beauty, and power it contains.

"It is possible to be mentally active and intellectually poor and sterile, to drive the mind along certain courses of work, but to have no deep life of thought behind these calculated activities. The life of the mind is rich and fruitful only when thought, released from specific tasks, flies at once to great themes as its natural objects of interest and love, its natural sources

[1] Johnson, "The Highest Life," p. 121.

of refreshment and strength. Under all our definite activities there runs a stream of meditation, and the character of that meditation determines our wealth or our poverty, our productiveness or our sterility."

The strength and productiveness of the spiritual life depend upon the life of thought centred in the person of Christ.

To many persons it is a help to the spiritual life, now and then, to go from the paths of men to the ways of nature. It helps to break the bondage of custom. The scales fall from the eyes. And the silent and beneficent ministers of growth are felt to be the ways of God. Isaiah revived the faith of the captives by the sight of the steadfast stars, and Jesus taught the certainties of the Father's care from the minuteness of the operations of nature. And to a mind oppressed by the problems of sin and suffering, or confused by the babel of human opinions, there is healing and strength in the simplicity and freedom of the outer world.

Like music, or any great art, it may perform a spiritual service in breaking in on our wonted states, detaching the mind from its worldly atmosphere, and, through its unwonted states, opening channels for the Spirit of God. There is a spiritual uplift in a mountain peak, or the sweep of the sea. In the heart of a great forest

a man may get a calm look at himself and his work, and understand the word of the Lord as he cannot in the crowded and noisy ways.

In the story of Kate Carnegie, the young minister used to go across the fields to a service Sunday afternoon in a distant part of his parish. And Dr. Watson finely says that the sermons prepared out-of-doors were his best sermons. "The fields and forests delivered his mind from many of the foolish notions of the schools, and he heard the Master speak, — as He used to speak among the fields of corn."

The man who has the mind of Christ can never be absorbed with theories and practices of self-culture. The true disciple does not think much of saving his own soul. He is too intent upon the Father's business for that. The test of spirituality is service, and it is also the highest means to it. There is no spiritual culture so fine as ministering to others, in the name of Christ.

"For the highest life nothing is more indispensable than Christian labor. This is taught in the most explicit way by our Lord. He unfolds at large the relation of intimacy in which he would remain with his disciples. It should be organic, vital, like that of a vine to its branches. But almost every verse in that wonderful passage tells us that the branches

are in the vine for the sake of fruit, and will be allowed to remain there only on condition of fruit-bearing. So shall we be Christ's disciples, and so shall his joy be in us. Work, work, this is health, and growth, and life." [1]

I have not exhausted the ways of maintaining the spiritual life; but I have spoken amiss if I have given the impression that it is a complex matter, and depends upon the doing of many things.

It is a simple matter, the step by step of daily life. We are to trust God's guidance, that He will bless the use of natural means; that His power, the life of the Spirit, comes not with our forced effort or impatient demands, but with our attitude of obedience to His will. Duty is the path of spiritual life and power.

It may cause surprise to some that the discussion of the spiritual life has not emphasized the marks of what is termed "a spirit-filled life." But the New Testament knows no esoteric religion, and the marks of the Christian preacher are traits in unmistakable light that should belong to all the friends of Christ. The Spirit of God cannot be distinguished from the human spirit, save by its effects: the Divine person cannot be put under investigation and

[1] Johnson, "The Highest Life," p. 125.

analysis — He is known only by the fruit of the Spirit.

And while certain men peculiarly endowed may have unusual marks of spiritual power, the New Testament ideal of character in the pulpit may be reached by the simple and natural means graciously offered to all. The conclusion of the question as to the person of the preacher, is that the prime qualification is character. The Holy Spirit is the Lord the Giver of life, and He helps us to live by showing us the truth and helping us to obey it, and so He lives and works in our life.

There has been no special method of the spiritual life suggested for the pulpit. The preacher as a leader is simply to be a marked spiritual man, under no different or higher law than the common Christian, — simply an example of the "abundant life" that Christ gives to men.

But we hear the emphasis placed upon special methods of the spiritual life. Conferences are held for the deepening of the spiritual life. Certain teachers are hailed as apostles of the higher life. Ministers gather in devout retreats and earnestly inquire the secret of power. Men painfully feel the limitation of their lives and grasp at any promise of larger and more useful life.

Certain stages can be marked in modern times in the conception of the spiritual life and struggle for it; each partial, carrying its own limitation, but each an appreciable advance in largeness of truth and promise of use to the pulpit.

For a hundred years the doctrine of *Sinless Perfection* was taught as the highest conception of the spiritual life. It was possible by special act of consecration and the gift of the Holy Spirit to reach a height above sin. This phase passed away, not so much because it was refuted by Scripture, as disproved by practical life. Those who claimed to be perfect were not the real saints of the world; the saints were the simple, devoted lives who were never thinking of their own state, but how they might bless other lives — giving no sign and asking for none. "The nearer men are to being sinless, the less they talk about it."

Within the memory of living men the advocates of the *Higher Life* were making their impress upon some of the finest, most sensitive minds of the church. It was not sinless perfection, but freedom from all known sin. Entire consecration would be followed by complete assurance, a special act of submission by the second blessing, the baptism of the Spirit. It was too subjective and introspective: far better

to look away from all emotional self-culture to the great objects of faith and service.

And to-day there is an active propaganda of a new phase of the higher life. Its teachers are not entirely one in their tone and emphasis. Some are more subjective than others. But the very age, its practical spirit and tests, and the tremendous forces that prevent the progress of Christianity and the comparatively slight impress made by the church upon the world, considering the agencies at work, all have turned the thought of certain advocates of the higher life, notably represented by Keswick and Northfield, to the subjective conditions for greater spiritual effectiveness. The words of Christ recorded in the first chapter of the Acts have been the keynote of their thought. "Tarry ye . . . until ye be endued with power from on high." The Holy Spirit for service, the Holy Spirit for power — is the reiterated word of these earnest men. To get and use the power of God, the Holy Spirit stored in Christ, is their purpose. To quote the words of Mr. Meyer: "As soon as you link to it (the Holy Spirit) not you, but the power of God through you, will repeat the marvels of Pentecost." And another, using the story of Gideon to enforce the same lesson, says, "Gideon's personality was merely a suit of clothes which God wore that day in

achieving the tremendous victory of His people." The promise of them all is that the Holy Spirit is given for power. And in the earnest desire to get this power, certain definite rules are laid down, — perhaps better say, certain definite conditions are insisted upon. Using physical analogies, certain acts, as casting out all known sin, complete surrender to the will of God — under one teacher these are developed into seven definite stages, before there can be the infilling and so the complete use of the person by the Holy Spirit.

The statement of such methods suggests their limitations.

In the interpretation of Scripture they sometimes combine the hardest literalism of figurative writings with the most lawless spiritualizing of the plain statements.

In the desire for power, they limit the use of truth and personality to the Scripture, ignoring the wealth of human interest and spiritual lesson in literature and art and human enterprise, and the pulpit as the noblest interpreter and educator of life.

In aiming at the conscious power of the Spirit they are teaching an impossible psychology and ignoring the variety and limitation of personality. God and man work together. We are ever working out what God is working in. The

Spirit of God is ever giving the thought and impulse that we are trying to carry out in our lives. The fruit of the spirit is ripened by sudden and tropical showers, and again, and far oftener, by still, dewy nights and long summer days.

Only a few natures, men of peculiar temperament and experience, can ever expect the sudden disclosures of spiritual truth, the sudden inrushing of spiritual power; the vast majority of men in the pulpit must take the common paths of the spiritual life, fixing the thought upon the things of Christ, setting the affections upon things above, using their wills in the daily choice of the mind of Christ; conscientious study, prayerful obedience, loving service of men, — then a man's life will certainly grow in the grace and knowledge of Christ, and he shall have the largest life and power possible for him.

We are to be grateful for the new emphasis upon service, as marking the larger conception of the spiritual life, and we are to take to heart the lessons so earnestly and so persuasively repeated, that the Spirit can make the largest use of a life only that hates the evil and loves the good and makes the Kingdom of God the supreme choice. Life is not for power, but power is the issue of life.

An old Scotch minister touched the heart of

the matter, when he said in a charge to a young man:

"The great purpose for which a minister is settled in a parish is not to cultivate scholarship, or to visit the people during the week, or even to preach to them on Sunday; but it is to live among them as a good man, whose mere presence is a demonstration that cannot be gainsaid, that there is a life possible on earth which is fed from no earthly source, and that the things spoken of in church on Sundays are realities."

I express our deepest need when I say we are to strive to be men in spiritual life.

Spirituality will give mental sanity. It pierces through the accidental and human to the essential, the universal, and the eternal. It can neither be indifferent nor intolerant. With broader vision is simpler and stronger faith. It grows not alone

> ". . . In power
> And knowledge, but by year and hour
> In reverence and in charity."

Spirituality will sustain a holy enthusiasm for our work and for humanity. We must catch the charm and inspiration of a higher world than self, or we shall succumb to the hard routine of our task. We must catch the vision

of God's thought of man, if we are to be saved from the estimates of society, and the narrowness of cultured taste, and be the servants of mankind. We must live on the ideal side, if we are to be masters of truth and masters of human hearts. The powers of the heavenly world were felt in every act of our Lord. "Jesus, knowing that he was come from God and went to God, took a towel and girded himself," and ministered in lowliest office. The whole arch of heaven bends over every act of holy service.

We are to be men in spiritual life, not angels; in touch with men, not above them. Not preaching an isolated and repellent piety, but bringing the world of heavenly ideals and inspirations into the life of the common day. The words of Kipling apply to the preacher as well as to every other genuine toiler:

"Go to your work and be strong, halting not in your ways,
Balking the end half-won, for an instant dole of praise.
Stand to your work and be wise, certain of word and pen,
Who are neither children nor gods, but men in a world of men."

PART II

THE MESSAGE

"The word had breath, and wrought
With human hands the creed of creeds,
In loveliness of perfect deeds,
More strong than all poetic thought."

— TENNYSON.

VIII

THE AUTHORITY OF THE MESSAGE

OUTLINE

The Preacher the man with a Message.
Definition of Authority in preaching.
The nature of Authority seen in a study of the Prophet's spirit.
- Comparison of the priestly and prophetic functions in religion.
- The prophets taught the simplicity, the practical and unselfish nature of religion.
- They were the great interpreters of life, the life of God and man.
- The prophetic spirit an abiding spirit in the church.
- The preacher essentially a prophet — the Christian prophets.
- The prophet's spirit connected with a great experience.
- The authority of the word lies in the experience of the soul.
- Examples of prophetic experience.

The ways of getting the Authority of Experience.
The relation between Objective and Subjective Authority in the Message; between Christ and the Preacher's experience.

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VIII

THE AUTHORITY OF THE MESSAGE, OR THE PROPHET'S SPIRIT

The distinguishing mark of the preacher is that he is a man with a message. He must have a word that he has thought out and felt and appropriated to his own life, so that it has become his word, the expression of his life; and it must be a message he feels so important for the life of men, that he must speak it out. A real message of God is a dominating and impelling power. It must be spoken whether men hear or forbear. Without the sense of message a man had better not speak at all. Whatever be his own choice or the ordination of human hands, without the sense of message he is not chosen of God to proclaim His word. Without the sense of message, he lacks the sustaining impulse of his vocation and the mastery over the minds and hearts of men.

What gives to the preacher's word a living and life-giving power? Is it the power of an

organization of which he is an accredited member? Is it the power of a body of writings held by the Church to give the Word of God, and of which the preacher is thought to be the interpreter? Is the authority of his message external to himself, so that without regard to his personality, his character or convictions, his message produces its divine effect? Or is it inseparable from his own person, not external but inner?

Authority is not in the claim or the right to command the obedience of men, but in the influence that lays hold of other lives, in that which finds men, to use the significant word of Coleridge.

"The real secret of our authority must lie in our own consciousness of sin forgiven and life imparted by an ever-present God, and in our power to reproduce in other souls the life which God has produced in our own." [1]

Whence comes the authority of our message? We may find an answer in the study of the *prophet's spirit.*

There are two functions in religion, the *priestly* and the *prophetic.* The priestly has to do with the forms of life, the prophetic with its spirit.

We cannot ignore or despise the priestly function in religion. Life must have form.

[1] Abbott, "Christian Ministry," p. 106.

If men think upon religious truth, their ideas must take clear, consistent statement. Creed is the form of doctrine. The creeds mark the thought of the Church, hold the mind to essential truth amid conflicting opinion, and are the steps by which the understanding passes on in its apprehension of God.

If men worship, they must have their fixed places and times and rites. Nothing should be so free and spontaneous as prayer. But the life that has no fixed habit of prayer will at last lose all desire for prayer.

If men hold great truths in common and worship together and coöperate for a common end, they must have associated life. The organization of the church is as much a law of life as the functional organization of the human body. The priestly function conducts and sustains these essential forms of life. Religion is partly habit. The child that gets by heart the exact form of Scripture words has the lines of habit formed along which the Holy Spirit may flash the meaning and life of the truth itself. The sense of God in His world, the fields and the forests and the thousand living things, all praising God, will come permanently, as a habit of thought, to the man who remembers the Sabbath and forgets not to make his way to God's house.

These earthly names that now divide us, Luther and Calvin and Wesley, and all the rest, will be forgotten or fade away in the light of the one name above every other. But God has spoken through these human teachers, there has been a providential emphasis upon doctrine or polity or endeavor; and we shall soonest reach the charity and life of the perfected kingdom by loyalty to the truth and opportunity within our own reach.

There is power in methodical piety. The training of a life begins by rule, and we only reach the liberty of the spirit by habitual obedience.

But the priestly function, apart from the prophetic, cannot produce and sustain the life of God in the soul. It tends to magnify the form and forget the spirit. It would test life by its Shibboleths, piety by its rituals, and loyalty to the Kingdom by zeal for a church. Overemphasis upon form has always the temptation to unreality. There may be religiosity with little vital religion.

The priestly function dwells upon that objective truth and form, connected with the beginnings of spiritual life, and not enough upon the truths that form and perfect character. It may make religion an insurance policy rather than the culture of the soul. It separates life

into secular and sacred. It is punctilious about so-called religious duties, — feels safe if they are performed, "tithes the mint, anise, and cummin," and is careless of the weightier matters, "judgment, mercy, and faith." It denies God by practically shutting Him out of a large part of life. He is God of the hills, of holy moments and places, but not of the valleys, where men toil and are tried and suffer.

The priestly spirit has often been proud of God's favor, and forgot the ministry of God's grace. Spiritual pride and class and race pride have been strangely blended. Trusting in God's election, claiming special privilege, it has forgotten that election is for service, — the few chosen that they may be the world's helpers. Its vision has sometimes been shut up to self, narrowly individual, and indifferent to the multitudes.

Formality, *superficiality*, and *exclusiveness* have been the evils that have grown up where the priest was the sole leader of religion.

And so God has raised up the prophets to correct priestly tendencies and to give the balance of truth and life.

The prophets ever taught the simplicity and spirituality of religion. They interpreted the meaning of temple and sacrifice and law and ritual. They were ever breaking through the

crust of behavior and finding the heart and sustaining its God-given principles and motives.

They taught the practical nature of religion. Sacrifice was good, but mercy and truth were better. Worship was to make life religious. And if life were not changed, if it were cold and selfish and sensual, the very worship was a mockery.

The prophets taught the *unselfish nature of religion.* It was not simply for the soul's own culture, for individual favor and blessing of the Holy One, but that the family and the community might be sweetened and enriched. They broke through race pride and prejudice, and taught the truths of humanity, gave glimpses of the wants and hopes of mankind, pleaded with Jerusalem for the sake of the world.

They are the teachers of the Messiah: first a national hope, the day of renewed and enlarged national life, growing with the years clearer and more specific until it takes the form of a person, a Son of David, an everlasting King, a Prince of Peace.

The walls of Jewish exclusiveness are broken down and the Messiah is the desire of all nations, the hope of the world.

So the work of the prophets is ever spiritual, not formal. They make God known — the one real, controlling person of the world and of

human life: God in His moral attributes, in His great purpose, manifest in all His dealings, to make men righteous.

They make man known, the essential nature and worth of man: man stripped of all the accidents of life; man lifted up into the light of God and so to a true self-knowledge.

So the prophets are the *great interpreters* of life, — they tell men about themselves; they search their age, and analyze it; they hold the picture up before the eyes of the generation that men may see whither they are tending, may see those great lines of moral and spiritual conduct that are as essential as the laws of nature.

They were men among men, knew their generation, and in its wants found their message. They believed that the battle with sin had to be fought out here, that the righteous life of the individual signified and involved the righteous life of society.

They were philanthropists and patriots because they were prophets. Love of man and country, pure and passionate, pulses in the speech of all of them. Whatever concerned man, work and family, houses and lands and government, concerned the moral nature of man and so was a matter of religion. Religion was coterminous with life. The laws of God were to be made universal and absolute.

And the authority of the prophets was in the fact that God had spoken to them, not especially in signs and wonders, but in the heart and life of each. The word of God came through their own life. The rough shepherd life of Amos, the simplicity and certainty of nature's processes, gave him his message to the sensuous, selfish, cruel life of degenerate Israel. And Hosea found the compassionate love of Jehovah in his own home love, betrayed, beaten, but unconquerable.

Creed and rite and temple are holy, but the prophet must breathe into them the spirit of the Divine life. The offices of religion are expressions of the soul and ministrative of its higher life, only as this living spirit is within the wheels. The health of social national life depends upon the prophet's spirit. "Where there is no vision, the people cast off restraint." When no pure and fearless soul has an unclouded vision of God, and gives the truth that opens anew the meaning of God's plan and searches deeper into the consciousness of men, then religion becomes formalism, its vital forces are spent; the evil elements of life grow bold, and there is an ebb in the flow of God's Kingdom. The open vision points to the open path of progress. The vision of the prophet's life reveals the source and power of his word. Tennyson's poem is a true picture of the prophet:

"He saw thro' life and death, thro' good and ill,
He saw thro' his own soul.
The vision of the eternal will an open scroll before him lay."

The prophet's spirit is to be an *abiding spirit.* The work did not close with the Old Testament prophets. They were essentially *forth-tellers,* speakers for God, and the Spirit of God gave them their message. There is need of the vital, interpretative speaking for God, — and the Holy Spirit will give the message.

There have been *Christian prophets.* The apostles were such. They testified of what they had seen and heard. Their message grew with their spiritual growth. The flavor and emphasis of the word came from the nature and experience of each. The needs of churches and the life of the age providentially directed the unfolding of truth. Their message was prophetic, the interpretation of the life of God in the souls of men. The very word lives in the New Testament. And all the words used for the Christian ministry, such as *herald* and *witness,* have in them the essential idea of the prophet.

The message is the same, yet ever new. The truth of Christ is the eternal, immutable truth, yet with endless form and application, living principles unfolding with the varying necessities and conditions of the human race.

Christ is the same yesterday, to-day, and forever. He is the Alpha and Omega of truth and life. But the understanding of Christ grows in the experience of every true Christian, and from age to age in the experience of the Church. It is a narrow, egotistic conception of the Gospel to hold that our philosophy of truth, our special viewpoint, is the unchanging one. The world has come by many painful steps to its present knowledge of Christ and His salvation, and the message-getting and message-bringing is not all over. Any one familiar with the history of Christian doctrine knows its gradual development in the life of the Church. Here truth has been brought out from the shadow, the conception of it made sharp and clear by prayer and meditation and contest and service. Here emphasis has rested upon a different aspect of truth, that in the end better proportion might be secured. There truth has been carried into a larger sphere, followed to its logical outcome, or applied to some new condition and need of the age.

Such unfolding of the principles of Christ must ever go on to meet the growing intellectual and social life of men. The simplicity of the truth in Christ must not be reduced to the natural or wilful ignorance of a church or generation. "To preach the simple Gospel" is a

false and misleading cry when it means the endless and wearisome repetition of a few accepted truths concerning Christ; and fails to make this divine life live again among men, throwing the light of God's mind upon all our standards and motives, our activities and conventions.

Men may have small ideas of the infinite reach of redemption! Surely Christ has a message for an age that carries at times the methods of the market into the courts of the temple; or rather that refuses to carry the vision of the temple into the shop and the counting-room.

Christianity has a message for men who try to hold in one hand the promises of eternal life, and grip even harder with the other all that the selfish and inhuman fingers of mammon can hold; who buy and sell men in the same market with their coal and their iron; who live in luxury and even build churches and other noble forms of religion out of conditions in which thousands of the children of God are forced to live little above the beasts of the field.

Christianity has a *social message*. The Spirit of God is certainly bringing out this side of truth to all who have eyes to see. When it demands repentance from sin, it may mean our complicity with unholy customs and unjust laws that make virtue hard and vice almost inevitable. It may be as reprehensible for the

minister of Christ to take no account of social conditions as for the doctor to care nothing for sanitary welfare — simply to stick to his individual cases. If we are anxious for nothing but to know the truth and to proclaim it, lovingly and fully, we shall have a message.

For the Spirit of God, the spirit of truth, is watching over all thought and life, all contest and ministry, guiding the researches of the great scholars, the obedient step of the humble followers, and the service of every one who loves his fellow-men, that at last Christ may have the pre-eminence.

Notice a *few of the noble lives* through whom God has spoken, — the prophets of the Christian church.

Clement brought out the immanence of God, God not simply transcendent, above all and Lord of all, but in touch with every life, His presence the very life of the world.

Augustine dwelt upon the sovereignty of God, God the source of good.

Luther taught the world the personal relation of the individual soul to God and the freedom of the conscience.

Wesley's message was the boundless grace of God — sufficient for the lowest: Christ a mighty Saviour, saving from the uttermost to the uttermost.

And *Phillips Brooks* has left his word of God, that our generation will not soon forget: that man though a prodigal is everywhere and always a son; and the fulness and glory of the life of sons.

All these men were prophets.

It is at a long distance that most men follow such prophetic souls. But this cannot lessen the truth of privilege and duty. Every man fit to stand in the pulpit must be in his own way and degree a prophet. He must receive the word of God. He has no light on coming events, he has no new Gospel to give; but he is a forth-teller for God, he must speak plainly and faithfully the message God gives him. He must reëxpress the old Gospel in the thought and speech of his own age, so that men can receive it. The Christian preacher must make God known; he must in some way open the heavens, give eyes to this peering, questioning age, and make *God real;* he must make man known to himself; he must work his way through the discussions and activities and conventions of life, and lay hold of the soul; he must impress men with the radical and sovereign nature of the Gospel remedy, the thoroughness and reach of the Christian truth, stopping short of nothing less than the sanctification of life, the redemption of the world.

Nothing but the prophet's spirit can do this. How can the modern preacher have the prophet's spirit, and so the word of authority? Some typical experiences of the Bible may give the answer. The prophet's spirit is always connected with a *great experience.* The authority of the prophet's word lies in this experience of the soul. The aged Elijah said to the younger man, Elisha, "Ask what I shall do for thee, before I be taken away from thee;" and the younger, catching some vision of the work to be done and feeling his need, asked for the best thing possible, "I pray thee let a double portion of thy spirit be upon me." "Thou hast asked a hard thing," said Elijah, "nevertheless, if thou see me when I am taken from thee, it shall be so unto thee; but if not, it shall not be so." The gift was conditioned upon his close personal following to the very end. And so, though Elijah repeatedly tested the sincerity and thoroughness of the desire, nothing could shake off the attendance of Elisha, and he was present at the striking and triumphant close of Elijah's prophetic career. He saw the heavens open, and the translation of Elijah in the chariot and horses of fire. The narrative teaches this truth. He had a great experience of the reality of God and the spiritual world, and of their nearness and contact with this.

And the spirit of Elijah rested upon Elisha. Thenceforth he could never doubt God and God's use of his servants. It was an *abiding experience*, and years after, when hemmed in at Dothan by the armies of Syria, he was not disturbed; and he asked that the eyes of his young servant, blinded and terrified by earthly power, might be opened and that he might see the armies of heaven marshalled for their defence.

Some *such great vision of God's truth*, some such abiding experience of God's grace, every true prophet has had.

Moses stood before the burning bush, an exile in the desert, doubting the meaning of his dream of a nation's deliverance, perhaps doubting the very power of Jehovah; and that common bush became aflame with God, and in his soul the voice of the Eternal sounded, and he went forth to do God's will, with something of the patience of the Eternal, "Enduring, as seeing him who is invisible." *Elijah* at Carmel, and still more at Horeb, in the voice that was stillness itself, had the unmistakable evidence that God was in the world working out his righteous will. *Saul of Tarsus* was stopped on his conscientious but mad career, and saw and heard the Christ, whom he thought dead and buried, and in that glorious vision had the spiritualizing of his

learning and experience, and became Paul the Apostle.

Augustine, after having whirled over all the dance floors of philosophy, and paid his respect to all possible systems, and grovelled through the experience of the senses, heard the voice in the cathedral cloister of Milan, "Take, read;" and the Scriptures revealed God and the soul to him, and he could say out of his deepest experience, "Thou hast made us for Thyself, and our heart is restless until it rests in Thee." *Luther*, from the study of the monk's cell, and the painful ascent of the steps of St. Peter, knew the truth "that the just shall live by faith."

John Wesley had profound experience of want and sin in the mines and factories of Yorkshire, and of God's grace and spirit in the prayer room at Oxford. *Phillips Brooks* saw love for Christ shining in a mother's face and found that all knowledge and culture and privilege had their true use in glorifying the divine life among men.

And it is possible for each soul, in its own degree and in its own way, to have some such living realization of God's truth. We have the message in the word of God; but the intellectual knowledge of the Scriptures alone, the most minute and scholarly study of Bible and theology

and providential history, will not give a man the prophet's spirit, and so the authority of the word. The word must be detached from the book and become a living element of experience. Ezekiel had to eat the roll before it was his word. Going through a seminary does not make a man a prophet. We do not need more ministers, so much as better ones. It is a singular fact that the false prophets were thick when the schools of the prophets flourished the most. They learned the trick of speech and the rote of religion. It is very easy to get the prophet's mantle and to assume the prophet's tone. But the prophet's spirit is a deeper matter. Without living experience of truth God does not speak through us.

It is beautifully said of Augustine: "He bore witness of what he himself had seen. The secret of his marvellous influence was that he prophesied, not of what he had read or thought, but of what he had *experienced;* that he uttered not merely his ideas, *but himself.*"

And Charles Kingsley in "Hypatia" vividly describes the power of Augustine: "Whether or not Augustine knew truths for all men, he at least knew sins for all men, and for himself as well as his hearers. There was no denying that. He was a real man, right or wrong. What he rebuked in others, he had felt in himself, and

fought it to the death-grip, as the flash and quiver of that worn face proclaimed." [1]

Then, to have authority for our message, we must get in some way an *experience of religion.* The old phrase, so much abused, has in it the profoundest truth.

Men are so easily moved by popular opinion, by currents of influence about them, by superficial and flippant criticism of religion, because they have no deep experience of God's grace. Those who know what a sure foundation God has laid do not make haste. The tree that sends its roots deep down into the earth lifts its trunk high against the sun and storm, and grows by the very contests of nature.

The man that has even the shortest personal creed — the single truth of the blind man — "One thing I know," is built on the rock, and the winds and the floods cannot destroy.

We are not to seek for any mysterious experience, trust in any singular and striking experience that may come to us; but we shall have this experience of religion if we are faithful.

It means the honest effort to be a student of the Scriptures, — to understand the message of the Gospel in its definiteness and sweep and passion. A lifelong discipline it means. The man who cannot say to grammar and philosophy

[1] p. 339.

and history, as they have to do with the interpretation of the Word, "You are my tools and I will know how to use you, and I will make you bring forth things new and old from the divine treasury," is not fit to go into the ministry. In some way the Bible must be made a living book, and with such a large and growing comprehension that it can be made a living book to others.

All the real prophets of Christianity have been masters of the Bible. They have dared, if need be, to be ignorant of many books, that they might know the one. It has been the one book to them, and its thought has dominated them.

If we are willing to gain the power of a sincere and thorough scholarship, we shall have commonplaces of the Word lighted with new glory, and visions of the Christ that shall make the heart burn within us. And we are to distrust any indolent and easy way of spiritual knowledge.

It means an honest effort to understand the life of men, a training in thinking and feeling that shall help to a penetrative understanding of other men's lives and hopes and temptations; some view of the long generations that have gone before us for poise and sanity and catholicity, and a humanity that shall count the humblest

and feeblest about us of priceless worth, and put us in the place of "men my brothers, men the workers."

It means at times a separation from men — the sacred hours of quiet in the soul, when God can speak and we can listen to His voice. No "Canon Wealthy" of Hall Caine's creation, who lives ever in the eye of the world, who secretly prides himself upon being a man of the world, and adapting Christianity to the nineteenth century, who comes into his pulpit so smug and well-favored and self-satisfied with his fine elocution and his polished rhetoric, — no man of this stamp can ever do the prophet's work. He may for the time gather an influential constituency; he can gather few souls into the Kingdom of a spiritual life.

This is no plea for ascetic virtue. The day of the monk is gone. The day of the large vision and the serene life should come. But we cannot see far and clear if we are always in the crowd; neither shall we have the serene soul, strong and true amid petty and confused alarms, unless sometimes, like our Master, we seek the mountain and the desert.

And if this finding of reality must come to some of us through a still *deeper experience*, through the fight with fierce passions or with the spectres of doubt, through the yielding of

cherished ambitions, or the death of hopes dear as life itself, we must not mistrust the guidance of our Father and call ourselves the afflicted, but like brave and true men wait for God to speak. "He calls His servants from the highlands of trial." It is the prophet's experience of the reality of God and of heaven and of spiritual truth.

The question as to the authority of the message has been partly answered. The prophet's experience speaks more convincingly than technical and philosophical discussion.

Protestantism means trust in the living Spirit to interpret the facts of historic Christianity and the growing life of the race. It means a religion of the Spirit and not a religion of merely outward authority. No authority of Church or the Bible can take the place of the voice of a man's own soul, guided by the Spirit of truth.

But Protestantism in the matter of religion as well as society may be in danger of undue individualism. The tendency may easily be to place emphasis upon experience to the exclusion of the Bible. Men speak of a continuous revelation, of the authority of the individual conscience, as though Christ were not the fullest word of God we knew, and the experience of man might yet develop a more authoritative religion than Christianity. So there are varying

and conflicting voices in the pulpit. There is a vagueness in the message, and men cry as of old — what is the truth? And they question whether the pulpit knows any more of these mighty problems of religion than the uncertain multitude does.

What is the relation between the Bible and experience, between the objective and inner revelation? Can our experience have any authority apart from Christ? The Scriptures are the treasury of religious experience. The truth was felt and lived and made a revelation by life before there was any record of it. The New Testament was experienced and spoken before it was written. The Gospel is the life, and the book is simply the record of it. In Christ was life and the life was the light of men. But this experience is written that we might have hope.

Men get their clear, redeeming knowledge of God through Christ, and they know Christ through the Scriptures.

The seat of religious authority is in the soul of man, but the source of authority is God. The spirit of man is the candle of the Lord. Conscience recognizes one as supreme; and Christ as the final word, the most perfect revelation of the Father, the "personification of God in human history," is the norm of experi-

ence. Man's experience of God cannot go beyond His. That I may know Him, is the great endeavor of the spiritual man. So our experience is inspired, tested, guided by the Scriptures as the word of Christ. The authority of the preacher's word comes from the experience in the soul of the truth of Christ. It is the union of the outer and inner experience: the great objective facts of Christ's Gospel as experienced and so interpreted by the soul of man. The man who rests solely upon the past becomes a traditionalist and dogmatist and fails to believe in the living Christ. The man who trusts solely to his own experience is a rationalist and may have no more authority than his own imperfect life. The life that draws its truth and inspiration from the Christ, that is ever trying to incarnate more of His truth, is the life to whom God is speaking and that shall be able to speak to men, not as the scribes, but with the power of a living and life-giving word.

IX

A LIVING MESSAGE

OUTLINE

The Age emphasizes the importance of a Living Message.
- The organizations of the Church tend to hide the prophetic office.
- Critical and æsthetic taste in worship may lessen the sense of message.
- The indifference of the multitude calls for a more vital word.

"The Testimony of Jesus" is the Living Message.
- Christ is the essential message of the Bible.
- Christ interprets the nature and movement of human life.

The Christian Prophets have ever given the Testimony of Jesus.
- The spiritual eras have been marked by the preaching of Christ.

The Living Message for each age is to be found in the Christ.

The Person of Christ makes the simplicity of the Gospel.
- The living message must be simple and positive.
- The positiveness of the modern pulpit affected by the enlarged religious problem and by Biblical criticism.
- The essential and unchangeable in the person of Christ.

The Person of Christ makes the full, comprehensive message.

The knowledge of Christ the condition for the Preacher's Living Message.

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IX

A LIVING MESSAGE

"The Church needs the prophet far more than the priest." To awaken men to a sense of God and to the higher relations of life, the preacher must have a message that is vital, essential, inspiring. What shall the message be?

The age speaks the importance of the preacher's message.

The highly organized nature of religious life makes a living message imperative.

The modern church, in its desire to minister to the whole life of man, has become a great business with its multiplying details of clubs and classes and societies. The prophetic office may be lost in the maze of activities. "The minister can be the busiest man in town, and yet leave his great task undone." A growing refinement finds expression in a critical and æsthetic taste in worship. Worship should be freed from careless and irreverent forms, made the sincere expression of the religious

life of the Church, and the more adequate voice and symbol of the great facts of religion.

But it must be remembered that perfection of liturgy has never been synonymous with spiritual life. The critical eras have never been creative ones. The emphasis upon form has invariably suppressed the Spirit. "It may be held for certain," says Canon Henson, of Westminster Abbey, "that an excessive care for religious ceremony is incompatible with a high standard of preaching."

Organization and worship, perfect as they ought to be, are no substitutes for the prophet's voice. The machinery of the Church will move in vain without the Spirit within the wheels. The arts may fill the temple with beauty and majesty, but the worshippers are no better unless the Shekinah is there.

And if we turn from the Church to the *multitudes without*, we shall feel still more deeply the *need of a vital message*. Is there a living, loving God, and has He a word for the strength and comfort of men? This is the question back of every other, and men have a right to look to the teacher of religion for the answer.

We must not try to quiet our conscience by saying that the multitudes beyond the Church are irreligious. That is not the exact and whole truth of the matter. They are more

uncertain than irreligious. The former conceptions of God do not meet the demand of the modern mind. Men think of creation as continuous and law as natural, and they apply the same tests to belief in God as to other knowledge; and many of them say, "We cannot know," and they know that something is lost from life when they say it. Some still keep their places in the church, for the sake of their families and the tender memories of their childhood. But there can be little force in such religious conformity when against the teachings of the Church their reason places a grave question. But far the greater number, uncertain as to God and the future, devote themselves with new zest to the life of this world. Never before has man had such mastery over the earth, and never before has its life been so interesting and absorbing. Every sphere of industrial toil, all that ministers to physical and mental delight, the realms of investigation and speculation, the relations and work of society and the State, have the devotion of multitudes of men and women who do not seek guidance and inspiration from the Church.

To their intellectual uncertainty must be added the moral questioning as to the power of the Church to control the life even of Christian lands. The multitudes without the Church are

not irreligious, though they may seem to live without God. Creeds, liturgies, sermons, mean little to them, yet they are not without moral earnestness, and many are eager to serve their fellow-men. If the questions of religion are not uppermost, it is not because they lack religious natures or that these questions will not again assert their supremacy. "Ours is not an age of doubt, it is one of hesitation and helplessness. It is a very serious age, with a grim determination for truthfulness. It will not pretend. It is not atheistic in temper, it is at heart forlorn. Its restless energy, its feverish activity, its lust for business, are only in part due to love for these things. This world is to-day so much as it is to civilized man, because the other world has never seemed so remote."

How shall the teachers of Christianity so live and speak that God shall be real, that the soul in men shall awake and assert its divineness, and men shall feel that to live the life of men they must have faith in God? It is all a challenge to the pulpit; a *call for a living message*. What shall the message be?

In the last book of the sacred Canon, through a series of titanic pictures, the contest of Christianity with the forces of evil is portrayed. Then comes the vision of triumph. The voice

[1] Dr. McConnell, "Christ," p. 190.

of a great multitude is heard, as the voice of many waters and mighty thunders praising God. The centre of the picture is Jesus; the power and the honor are His; in the tender and beautiful symbolism of John, it is "the marriage of the Lamb." All creation joins the Church universal in its rejoicing. And the men who shall bring in the promised day are the men in all ages that hold the testimony of Jesus.

The scene closes with the impressive words: "For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." The true prophets of the Church — the men who speak for God, and win the spiritual victories — are the men who give the testimony of Jesus. Christ is the living message.

It is a truism to say that this library of religion that we call the Bible has its significance and unity in the person of Christ. Its history is a record of the people's need and preparation for Him, its prophecy points with increasing clearness to His coming and character. Christ said of the Old Testament writings that "they testify of Me." And the reason and heart of the New Testament is the person of Christ. Its Gospels are His biography, the Acts are a record of His presence in the infant Church, the Epistles are the unfolding and application of His truths,

the Apocalypse the picture of the present and future contest of Christ in His Church with the forces of evil. He is its substance, its purpose, its inspiration. The supreme authority of the Bible is in its living word.

Christ holds the *key to the nature and movement of human life.* Christianity begins as simply loyalty to the person of Christ and grows into an all-comprehending philosophy of life, with a single, ever moving, and unchanging centre in the fact of Christ. The experience of Paul is in some sense a path and type of the experience of the Church. He believed when he stood before the living Christ and so knew that His life and teachings were the word of God. At first He was simply the Messiah, the promise made to the fathers; but to Paul's devout meditation and profound experience He became the very fulness of God. He was the friend and Saviour of sinners, and through this relation He grew into the interpreter and ruler of all life, of nature and of human souls, the "One worthy to open the book" of man's nature and destiny, the philosophy of history, "in whom were all things created, in the heavens and upon the earth," "in whom all things hold together," the one divine event to which the whole creation moves.

"I remember," says Dr. Dale, of Birming-

ham, "that when I discovered and knew that the Lord Jesus Christ is alive, I could think of nothing else, and preach nothing else for weeks. It was a genuine Eastertime."

The historic Jesus is not only fact to be accepted and remembered, to be believed and taught with its inference of doctrine and duty, He is the living Brother, Redeemer, and Lord, the "light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world," the perfect truth of which the best that men have found in every age and land are "broken lights," the realized dream of sages and seers, the inspirer of all true life, the director of the beneficent energies of mankind, the Lord of that "Eternal Kingdom to which the race was destined from the beginning, and in which alone the life of man, which is akin to the life of God, can reach the height of its power, its greatness, its perfection, and its joy."

It follows that all teachers who have caught visions of the Kingdom have in some way spoken of Jesus. The testimony of Jesus has been the message of all prophetic voices. It certainly was so with *the Apostles.* Their preaching was all about Jesus, — the story of His life and death and resurrection. Naturally, these facts were adapted to and colored by the condition of the audience to which they spoke. To the Jew they spoke of Christ as the

fulfilment of their Scriptures, to the Roman as the doer of mighty works, to the Greek as the teacher of beautiful and divine truths; to the disciple of whatever race or speech, Christ as the author and companion of the new life.

As the generations pass and the Church pushes into new regions and meets new conditions and presents the Gospel as a world-religion, the simple story of Christ grows and unfolds by its contest with new systems and its adaptation to larger experiences. It becomes the epic of heroic sacrifice, the drama of personal and social devotion, the voiced lyric of personal feeling, the history of organized service, the philosophy of thought and life. But the word, under whatever form, has power from Christ. It is the most life-giving as it has most of Him.

The *Spiritual Eras* of the Church have been the days of preaching, when the old story was told with new power. The Christian prophets have ever given the testimony of Jesus.

Clement spoke of God in His world and God in human life, because he had seen Him in the face of the Christ.

Augustine's message, that God alone is good and the source of good, came from his profound knowledge of his own heart, and that all that was truly good in him came from his fellowship with the Divine man.

Luther stirred the low and mechanical life of mediævalism with his doctrine of salvation by personal faith in the Christ.

Wesley, in the midst of a philosophic, selfish, and hopeless Christianity, renewed the faith of men in the living power of Christ to save the lowest.

Channing, to men tenacious of opinions and cold of heart, spoke of Jesus as the elder brother and the imitableness of His example.

Phillips Brooks revealed the power and glory of sonship in Christ to an age overwhelmed by the sensible and the material and sceptical of its spiritual worth.

Each great soul has found the message in Christ and has added something to the fulness and divineness of the message. There is a story of the Buddha that is far truer of Jesus. It is said that a group of devout artists were called to make a picture of "the Light of Asia." Each in turn wrought, and out of his own experience and conception gave some new touch to the picture. No single life alone could give more than a partial and imperfect view, but together the picture was complete. No man or church or age can give the whole message of Christ. Every man can give a true message, and the work shall go on until the world shall see Him as He is.

The fresh, living message is always to be had from the Christ. The experiences of the ages, the body of tradition, must be considered. An undue individualism is the sin of Protestantism. Disregard for what other men have found and taught, the great symbols of the Church, may show a sad lack of humility. But nevertheless there is no message of life-giving power apart from a new and personal experience of Christ. "Back to Christ" is the watchword of a vital and sincere faith. David Hume once said, on hearing John Brown, of Haddington: "That is the man for me; he means what he says; he speaks as if Jesus Christ were at his elbow." And it is said of Rutherford, that "when he appeared in the pulpit on Sundays, the people were overawed with the sense of Christ being in the preacher. It was Christ's face they saw beaming on them in the face of their pastor, and his tones thrilled with the power of the voice which once spake on earth as never man spake." [1]

And this is the *simplicity* of the Gospel, some word of Christ that has sounded through the depths of the preacher's own soul, some relation with Him that has mastered his conscience and desire and will, so that he can say to men, "Come and see that the Lord is good," and men

[1] Horton, "Verbum Dei," p. 174.

shall believe that he knows something of the message he speaks.

The simplicity of the prophet's message is in perfect keeping with its comprehensiveness, though to a superficial mind they may seem contradictory. Both are essential truths for the preacher. The word that is to win attention and give life must be a *simple* and *positive* word of Christ. Confused, obscured, variant voices have come from the pulpit of our age.

This is God's world, men say, and all that ministers to the good of man is a part of His Kingdom and may have place in the instruction of His servants. The altar sanctifieth the gift. And the horizons have widened too fast for the eye, and the prophet has not been able to grasp the meaning of the whole from the standpoint of Christ and His *cross*.

And then criticism has been doing its necessary work. The word of Christ has come to us in a body of writings, and these cannot escape the tests of other literature. The truth has been bequeathed to us through systems of human thought, and the mind of Christ must be distinguished from human forms. All honor to the reverent and fearless scholars of the Church. The quiet work of the study may be as important for the Kingdom of God as the fervent word of the Evangelist.

But will men distinguish between the things that are shaken and the unchangeable word? Through the dust of criticism will men see that indestructible and divine message which is the heart and burden of the Evangel? The people — they must have a clear word to comfort their hearts and show them the way everlasting. We may know but a few things, but they must be the essential and the eternal. Our critical studies will be in vain unless they make the way plainer. We have not the spirit of truth unless Christ is glorified. We cannot be uncertain about Him and speak a doubtful word and be His messenger and His witness. There can be no doubt that the pulpit of the age has lost something of its certitude and authority. And in reverence and humility and sincerity of study and of life it must regain it, if we are to have a clear word of prophecy. We must stop quibbling about the form and fringe of truth, and grasp that which is the life. This must be taught with the utmost conviction and directness and sincerity. "The critic is an analyst with a pair of scales; the evangelist is a missionary with a cross." "Speak a gude word for Jesus Christ," said the dying mother to her boy, in the beautiful story by Dr. Watson. "The fire of the hearth licked up the masterpiece with its statement of theological thought and its quotation from the

scholars, and in the love born of sacrifice the young minister spoke to his people. The subject was Jesus Christ, and before he had spoken five minutes I was convinced, who am outside dogmas and churches, that Christ was present. The preacher faded from before one's eyes, and there was the figure of the Nazarene, best lover of every human soul, with a face of tender patience such as Sarto gave the Master in the Church of the Annunziata, and stretching out his hands to old folk and little children as He did, before His death, in Galilee. His voice might be heard any moment, as I have imagined it in my lonely hours by the winter fire or on the solitary hills — soft, low and sweet, penetrating like music to the secret of the heart, 'Come unto Me and I will give you rest.' "

It should be said that the plea for a simple positive Gospel is sometimes made for reasons that can hardly be harmonized with the mind of Christ. A *full, comprehensive* message is no less important than a simple one, and they need never be contradictory. "Give us the simple Gospel," "Preach Christ," are often used as cant phrases, by the pew to keep the pulpit from interfering with immoral gains and immoral pleasures, by the pulpit to emphasize some partial and sectarian test of orthodoxy. John Wesley protested against what were "vulgarly

called Gospel sermons." With the satire of a Sydney Smith he pictures "the pert, self-sufficient" men who talk loudly of "Christ and His blood or justification by faith" and the "hearers cry out, What a fine Gospel sermon." "Preaching Christ" has a much larger meaning than some who glibly talk of it ever think. The Gospel is indeed "the plain man's pathway to heaven." Christ is so simple that a child may know and love, and He is "the eternal contemporary of the saints and sages of every age." He must be held up as the friend of sinners and as the master of human life. His grace can save to the uttermost, and His principles are absolute and universal in the affairs of the individual and in the manifold and complex relations of society.

It is a wonderful thing to preach Christ. Surely the pulpit has not reached the full measure of the thought. Even the aged Apostle confessed, "We know in part and we prophesy in part." The Scriptures speak of Him. History is His pathway. Literature is full of His inspiration. All thought, endeavor, progress, speaks of Him who gives it life, color, purpose. Nature is His. Her manifold messages are His voices, and her forces are His servants.

The man who has this conception cannot but preach a living message. To preach the Gospel

is to preach Christ in all His relations to the Bible, to the world, and to humanity. Such a spirit sees Him everywhere, and labors and waits for the perfect revelation.

Christ is the Alpha and Omega of theological culture as He is of Christian experience. "That I may know Him" should be the great endeavor of every student for the ministry as it was the single purpose and passion of the Apostle Paul. He will glorify all learning and all learning should bring its tribute to Him. "It will be a hard day," says Dr. Alexander Whyte of Edinburgh, "when I cannot make a straight path from any field of study to the Cross of Christ."

"To know Christ" involves moral conformity as well as intellectual apprehension; there is no other spiritual knowledge save that which comes from the union of head and heart and will, the knowledge of experience. The moral test of the prophet is inseparable from the doctrinal. "Not every one that saith Lord, Lord," are the warning words of Christ. "Not every one that speaketh in the Spirit is a prophet," is the rule laid down in the "Teaching of the Twelve Apostles," "but only if he have the behavior of the Lord." The life of the prophet speaks as loudly as his word.

Therefore, as sincere learners (for that is the very picture of a prophet) we are to practise

the presence of Christ, not suffering ourselves to accept any truth without honest application to self, striving to become all that the truth is fitted to make us. Religious truth must be present in life before it can be definitely present in thought and find warm and persuasive utterance in speech. "Realize in experience," says Dr. Dale, "without haste and impatience, the contents of the Christian revelation, and then you will be able both to think and to state them." Growth in the grace and knowledge of Christ will give the prophet's message and help to make it a word of living and life-giving power.

X

THE AIM OF THE MESSAGE

OUTLINE

The Gospel of a Person especially adapted to our age.

Christ gives the Abundant Life: this the Aim of the Message.

Paul's doctrine of reconciliation expressed in terms of life.

John interprets life in terms of love.

Christ's truth of Life the completion of prophetic teaching.

The Old Testament teaches the meaning of a righteous life.

Christ adds the graces of the Spirit to the moral qualities of life.

The fullest life the aim of the Gospel message.

The Message of Life to be full and harmonious, free from partial and undue emphasis.

Not as chiefly escape from penalty.

Not to be identified with subjective states.

Not adequately interpreted in terms of future bliss.

Christ's Truth of Life to be measured by spiritual terms.

"Eternal life." "Christianity is God's way of making a man."

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X

THE AIM OF THE MESSAGE

The last lecture dwelt upon the special message of the preacher. It is what Dr. Henry van Dyke well calls the Gospel of a Person. Christianity is the religion of a Person. Christ has been the theme of the best preaching of every age. He is especially adapted to the need of our own age. The person of Christ awakens the true selfhood in men. In the time when the sense of personal responsibility is dimmed by scientific and philosophic thought, Christ awakens the fact and sacredness of personality and makes conscience sensitive and authoritative. When speculative doubt blocks the way of faith for many thoughtful lives, Christ stands as the best life, the largest truth, the acknowledged master, and obedience to Him as the only path of spiritual knowledge. To preach Christ is the comprehensive, inspiring message of the pulpit. Not a narrow, technical, sectarian Christ, but the breadth of His life; Christ in relation to the Scriptures, to nature, and to human interests; in that fulness of rela-

tion which He has called the "Kingdom of God." The essence of the message then is the Person of Christ. But this does not answer the whole question as to the message. There are many truths connected with the Person of Christ, and these truths are held in different proportion by different men. What are the essential truths, the sum and substance of the message, that every man ought to preach to gain the highest life of men?

These practical questions of what to preach are involved in a larger question and are conditioned by it. *What is the aim of the Gospel message?* What did Christ come to do? The various answers of the Gospels are adaptations to the various natures and experiences of men. But the word that seems to take in all of man and his relations is found in the tenth chapter of John. "I am come that ye might have life and have it abundantly." Life is the need and mystery of man.

> "'Tis life whereof our nerves are scant,
> More life and fuller that we want."

What is life? Every thoughtful man feels the impossibility of reducing it to a definition or a formula. And when it seems to baffle us and we cry out over its imperfection, — and with only strength enough to cry, "What is life?" —

we feel that Christ knows life, its height and its depth, its feeblest beginning and its utmost reach, that He is life and to know Him is to have life.

The life of any organism depends upon harmony with its environment. And this biological law has its analogy in the life of man. God is the true environment of the soul: nature, the sensible expression of God and in which He lives and rules, the world of beings that carry out His purpose, the forces within and without that express His will. The life of man depends upon obedience to the laws of life, physical, mental, and spiritual, God's will in nature and redemption. In harmony with God is life; out of harmony with God is death. If the fact of God is granted, this is self-evident.

Moreover, it needs no proof that man is not in perfect harmony with God. He goes aside from the right. He comes short of the best. Sins of omission and commission every honest man must confess, as in Bishop Usher's prayer. This is sin — to fail to do, or so imperfectly to do, the will of God. So Paul's definition of Christ's aim is the same truth put into new form. He speaks from the standpoint of man's need. The essence of his Gospel is expressed in the great phrase, "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself."

Reconciliation in the terms of life is character. Christ is the author and finisher of faith, the goal of all endeavor. To have life is likeness to Christ. To Paul, moral progress is always Christward. "Till we all attain unto a full-grown man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ."

Life in the fullest sense of the spiritual nature of man is the aim of the Gospel preacher. It is spiritual life, in contrast to the sensible, sensuous, temporary, superficial that men seek, and thereby cheat themselves into thinking that they have life.

The Apostle John defines life as the love of the Father. "Love not the world," he says, "neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." [1]

The world that is condemned because opposed to true life, is not the *world of nature*, which God has pronounced very good, and which may minister to the spirit of man. In the lowly daisy there abides "some concord with humanity." And the man who truly loves nature and is in fellowship with her life finds the truths of singleness and simplicity and obedience and the truest ministry to the Spirit.

It is not the world of *human life* that is con-

[1] 1 John ii. 15–17.

demned, for Christianity has given worth to the humblest man, and interest in men is mark of the higher life. Nor is it the world of human activities that is opposed to life, the sum of earthly plans and achievements, for these are but the expression of the true energy of man, and may minister to the perfection of the Kingdom.

"Worldliness," as Robertson says, "is determined by the *spirit* of the life, not the objects with which the life is conversant. It is not the flesh, nor the eye, nor life, which are forbidden, but it is the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eye, and the pride of life. It is not this earth, nor the men who inhabit it, nor the sphere of our legitimate activity, that we may not love; but the way in which the love is given which constitutes worldliness." To know that we are God's children, and live in God's world, to recognize Him and to delight in His law, this is life. "He that doeth the will of God abideth forever."

Christ's teaching of life is the fulfilment and completion of a long line of teaching and training.

It is significant that the *Old Testament* has only glimpses of a future life, the light seeming to shine on only here and there a mountain peak. Whether the truth of immortality was grasped by only a few advanced souls, or whether it was the general background of thought, vague

and clouded with earthly conceptions as in so many other races, it would be hard to say. It is certain, however, that the purpose of the Old Testament teachings and rites is something different and preliminary to the doctrine of the future. Its great word is *righteousness* — to secure a right life for men on the earth. The sense of the relation of human life to the supreme life, and the criticalness of this relation, is constantly taught by precept and example. The thought of God must be lifted up above the gross and sensual conceptions of idolatry to one who is supreme in power and authority because supreme in moral qualities. The fickle and selfish wills of earthly deities, projection of man's heart, must yield to *one will* as certain as the course of the stars and the procession of the seasons, and connected vitally and minutely with all that concerns human life. The I am, the One, the Supreme, the Holy One, the righteous God who has made the world and man, who has made laws to govern life and the social forms of the family and the State, this is the revelation of the Hebrew race, the teaching of the Old Testament. Its purpose is the development of the conscience of the race, the sense of right and wrong, through relation to the mighty, wise, and righteous God.

The obligations of life flow from the source

of life. Men must strive to be like their conceptions of God. They must be under the sanction of His moral majesty. It is a moral world in which men live, and they must strive for a life in harmony with the moral rule, the just and holy God. There are beautiful glimpses of a closer and tenderer relation, the shepherd love and care of the Psalms, the wedded love that still lives though rejected and outraged as in Hosea. But the central thought of the Old Testament revelation is the unity and holiness of God; the great aim is to bring man to a righteous life, to lay the moral basis for the higher life of the race, to give man a sensitive and true conscience, to make the spirit of man the candle of the Lord, so that life may at last be lighted with a divine light. It educates the soul to a conception of a higher life and to a hunger for it.

Christ carries on the prophetic thought. He completes the conception of life, and gives the truths and the motives that shall help men to realize it. The holy ruler is now the "righteous Father"; the subject is now the son. The sanctions of law become the obligations of love. On the moral basis of life rise the qualities of the Spirit. Righteousness is not only obedience to law written in conscience and in the very nature of things, but the fulfilment of

the higher law of love. In Christ mercy and truth have met together, righteousness and peace have kissed each other. "All's law, yet all's love." The Christian conception of life and type of life is distinctly higher than that of the Old Testament, and is the peculiar product of the life and spirit of Christ. On the great elemental, universal qualities, that have their embodiment in the moral law, — reverence, justice, obedience, fortitude, honor, — rise the finer qualities of the Spirit: the sense of imperfection, the sorrow for moral failure, the passion for righteousness, the loving recognition of the moral discipline of life, the singleness of devotion to that which is excellent, the enthusiasm that makes life a service for the spread of truth, the trust that accepts any cost for the good of man. The portrait of the disciple, of citizenship in the Kingdom of God, drawn for us in the short and heavenly lines of the Beatitudes, *is life* as Christ lives it and reveals it, and as He would help us to realize it. And this is to be the aim of every message of the Christian pulpit, life as Christ conceives it, and as Christ alone can give it.

We are to avoid giving *a partial or one-sided* emphasis to the message. Christ's truth of life is often preached as though it were an *escape from penalty*. The life of man as we know it is

a violation of the moral law and a failure even to perceive the higher realm of the Spirit. And goodness means moral order; and sin — the least sin — is so far moral disorder and thereby tends to separate the soul from fellowship with God. It is a world of law, and sin brings its self-inflicted penalty. How to escape the shame of moral failure, that the soul has been untrue to its best self; how to escape the guilt of sin, that the soul has been untrue to its relation to God, — is the question that weighs upon the mind. When the soul gazes upon the pitiful contrast between the life of a son and its own blind, selfish life, the tragic word of the Psalm is none too strong. "The hand of God was heavy upon me; and my moisture was turned into the drought of summer." Christ's word of forgiveness seems to come as the best and greatest word to man. To have Christ say, "Thy sins be forgiven thee," "Neither do I condemn thee; go and sin no more," seems the good news of salvation. It is the turning point of life, the assurance that God trusts the soul, that fellowship is renewed, and the Father's house is once more open to man. And the life that Christ gives may easily be identified with its early stages, and the emphasis be placed upon the removal of penalty to the neglect of larger truth. "There is now no condemnation" may become the Gospel message.

Again, Christ's gift of life may largely be thought of *as subjective states*, the peace of mind from the assurance of sin forgiven, the joy of fellowship with God, the hope that this gift of life may not fail. And the emphasis may so be placed upon feeling, that the soul may expect unnatural marks of the work of Christ, and failing to receive may be left in doubt, or driven to abnormal and sensational ways of sustaining the spiritual life. Feeling is but the shadow of the man, as Henry Drummond so strikingly taught. If we do the will, the appropriate feelings may be trusted to follow the acts of obedience. And once more — *future bliss*, the joys of heaven, are often pictured as the goal of life. In more than one age this world has seemed very evil, and Christ's gift of life hung above it as a beautiful hope of the future. And to multitudes, "weary of earth and laden with sin," the promise of a future life, free from the perverting and crippling influences of evil, has seemed the great boon of the Gospel.

Christ's truth of life has been interpreted in terms of human desire, and not in the abundant life Christ is able to bestow upon men. Life as salvation has been conceived of under the terms of a transaction rather than the training of a wise and loving Father.

Christ teaches salvation as a life that has fellowship with God. It escapes from penalty because it turns to the Father and gains the victory of the filial spirit. It has the joy of salvation because it is sustained by the free spirit of a Son. Heaven is a glad expectation because it has been partaking of the heavenly life. The future of the sons of God is but the reasonable hope from their present life. The life that Christ gives has the deathless qualities of faith, hope, and love; it does the will of God and so partakes of His ageless life. It is measured by terms of spiritual being and not by time. It is æonian, the new age life; eternal life because it has the life that God gives and cannot be measured or limited by the flight of years. The present has relation to the future as the blossom to the fruit. The act of forgiveness is a single step in the long process of life. Eternal life in its beginning and growth is the constant act of God's grace. The moral realm is blended, not lost, in the realm of love. The righteous and loving character of God is manifest in the life of sons. The aim of the Gospel is to quicken in men the sense of sonship and help them to live lives worthy of it. It is to awaken the sense of spiritual manhood and furnish the means and motives for its fullest realization. Christianity is God's way of making a man.

XI

THE CONTENTS OF THE MESSAGE

OUTLINE

The Person and Presence of God the first truth of the message.
- God not to be proved, but manifested.
- God best made known in Jesus Christ.

The truth of Man's Nature to be taught, to awaken spiritual desire.
- Jesus the best revelation of man, of his need and possibility.
- The moral sense awakes in the presence of Jesus.

The truth of the Atonement in preaching.
- Its prominence in Apostolic preaching.
- The difficulties of preaching the doctrine to the modern mind.
- It must be preached as a vital reality.
- The justice and love of God should both be expressed.
- It should give the assurance of sin forgiven.
- It should express a law of life.

Faith in its various aspects in the Gospel Message.
- Faith must be preached as belief, aspiration, obedience, summed up in committal.

The Holy Spirit an essential truth of the new life.
- Essentially a truth of Christian experience.

The Resurrection in the pulpit message.

The Spirit of the pulpit message.
- The preaching should be positive and constructive.
- And in faith that men will respond to the message.

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XI

THE CONTENTS OF THE MESSAGE

ETERNAL life is the aim of the Gospel message. How shall the aim of the preacher's message be gained? How shall the person of Christ be presented, the truths connected with Him, so that men shall partake of His life?

The *person* and *presence of God* must be the first truth the preacher presents. Life may be defined as fellowship with God; and the sense of God and the need of God must be awakened in the soul. We are not to try to prove God by argument. The most conclusive arguments on theism can only strengthen faith, not create it. We are simply to try to manifest God — or open the eye that God may be seen. A man may deny that there is music in a sonata of Beethoven or a nocturne of Chopin. But if you can play the masterpiece, really interpret the soul of the artist, the man will say quickly enough there is music in it. Every soul has the latent sense of God, that can be brought out if God is truly interpreted.

Men are made conscious of God, the latent faith is made living, as they understand Jesus. To present Christ in His purity that was a passion for goodness; His love, never limited by taste and appreciation and reward, but going out to the unlovely and unthankful; His forgiveness, with no bitterness and resentment, but full of pity for the blindness and hardness of men; His humility, that had no self-conscious virtue, but freely took the office of a servant, is to make men know that they are in the presence of the Divine life. The character of Jesus throws light upon the person of God. He is always conscious of God. His life is so single and consistent that every word that He speaks, every action the most spontaneous and unpremeditated, makes known this God-consciousness, reveals God to us. He begins His young life with a sense of mission from God and His last word is a sense of completeness. To Jesus the world is full of God. The processes of nature are proofs of the Father's love and care. And men, evil as they are, are the children of God, and little children are of the Kingdom of God. And Jesus revives and strengthens in our hearts the faith in God. He does not argue about God and try to convince the reason. He takes the fact of God for granted, and also the fact that we, if we are to live the lives of men,

must have faith in God. He simply speaks out of his own experience of God. He simply reveals the traits that are most like God. And in the presence of Jesus it is easy for men to believe in God. Out of the mystery of being, from all the perplexing problems of nature, and more than all from the dark questions of human experience, stands forth this simple, radiant, heavenly life of Jesus. He rivets the apprehension of God upon the heart and conscience.

We are to preach Christ's truth about the Fatherhood of God. We shall be able to reveal God if we truly present the Christ. "And this is life eternal that they might know Thee the only true God, and Him whom Thou didst send, even Jesus Christ." [1]

The *truth of man* must be taught, man a son, though a prodigal son. We must do just what Jesus did, awaken the sense of spiritual worth, create a hunger and thirst in the soul. "If thou knewest the gift of God and who it is that saith unto thee, Give Me to drink, thou wouldst have asked of Him and He would have given thee living water." Here again the best revelation of man's nature is in the person of Jesus. Out of His life comes the interpretation of life. The meaning of our lives is made known by countless common things. The daily things

[1] John xvii. 3.

that make up a man's life begin to take their true shape, a wayside word, a cup of water, a friendly meal. Duty gets its real significance in His "My meat is to do the will of Him that sent Me." Friendship finds its motive and its bond in the "love unto the end." Pain and sorrow become the ministers of beauty and strength by the fellowship of His suffering. Service gets its vision and its motive when He, "knowing He was come from God and went to God," takes a towel and girds himself and does the work of a servant. We get the sense of proportion as we stand before the life of Christ. We get true self-estimates and "nobler loves and nobler cares." The very atmosphere grows luminous. We are able to see life clear and see life whole.

The moral sense awakes. By self-comparison men never truly feel their need. They may live in such false estimates as never to catch a true view of themselves. But before Christ they feel their sin. They know what moral dwarfs they are. "Depart from me, Lord, for I am a sinful man," is the instinctive cry of every honest heart. And every added conception of Christ will only help to sharpen a man's self-estimates. The impulsive man who gives the instinctive cry of need also makes the spontaneous confession of faith, "To whom

shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life." Repelled by our sin, we are drawn by His gracious and beneficent life. A man not only sees himself in Christ, but the man he ought to be and can be. It is the vision of possible sonship. If we would convince men of sin and give them a longing for a better life, then we must make Christ live before them in His simple, gracious, heavenly life.

What place shall *the Atonement* have in our preaching? It is found in the Scriptures, the red line runs through them; it is found in life, there is a vicarious element in all true progress; and it must be found in our sermons if we preach the Gospel in its simplicity and fulness. Christ spoke of His death as the great attractive power. It was certainly the burden of the Apostolic preaching. Paul gloried in it. John and Peter unmistakably taught it. It has been found in all the great preaching of the Church. Take the Cross out, and you have no Gospel. Without the Cross Christianity is only the refinement of human reason about spiritual things, an ethical education, and not the redemptive power of God. It is not necessary that the preacher present a particular philosophy of it, though every man will try to think it through. There seems to be no consistent theory in the New Testament writers; they present different sides

of the truth to different minds, to men who have had different training. And it is possible that states of training and mind corresponding to the historic stages of Hebraism and Hellenism, of the Monarchic view and the Democratic, may always be in our congregations. It is very certain that these different states are now among our people. And the seemingly opposing views and trainings make the most difficult problem of preaching. Dr. Berry of Wolverhampton, who was called by Plymouth Church to succeed Henry Ward Beecher, in his first years preached the sacrifice of Christ as expressing the suffering love of the Father for the wayward child. But he found, as he thought, that this more refined and subtle philosophy did not take hold upon the conscience of helpless and hopeless men, and so he was led to preach a more simple and objective theory, that in some way Christ stands in the place of sinful men, and that the Cross assures Divine forgiveness and help to the man who will look to it. He found that this actually gave peace to guilty consciences, and new energy to hopeless hearts. Mr. R. J. Campbell of the City Temple, London, who in a city of six million people can draw to his ministry certain select minds, no doubt helps many to keep their religious life, who under old forms of truth would be agnostic. But his

theistic monism is simply the vaguest unreality to nine-tenths of the English mind marked for its practical and realistic sense.

It is possible to hold and express a theory of the Atonement that shall harmonize with the philosophy of evolution. But is it best constantly to preach the truth in this form? How many of the people know or care about the philosophy? It may be the truest form to-day. But who dare say that it is the ἀλήθεια, the unveiled reality, and that even the immediate future may not change the form? The question is, will the truth put in biological forms convince the sinner of his sin, and lead him to repentance and faith? Christianity makes God the great missionary force to reach the downmost man, and our preaching must stand the test of its power to reach men in their sins. Four elements should be in our preaching of the Atonement, whatever be our theory of it.

We should present it as a *vital reality* of the Gospel, inseparable from any truthful interpretation of the Scriptures, having manifold expression and correspondence in human history, and as a necessary means of salvation.

In our preaching of the Atonement we should try to reveal both *the justice* and *the love* of God. The Kingship of God is not lost in the more vital and noble conception of the Fatherhood. Love

is the greatest thing in the world. God is love. But we can never take law out of love. We cannot do this of the best human love, without leaving it earthly, sensual, devilish.

> "You know how love is incompatible
> With falsehood, — purifies, assimilates,
> All other passions to itself."

And Christianity has interpreted the divine meaning of love and given it a heart of strength; it has even given it a new word, free from all taint of corruption. Love is not infinite good-nature, but goodness, and goodness in its very essence is moral order. Love is not a kindly sentiment; it is a principle of conduct, a conception of duty, a purpose of service. Love can never be an "unerring light," unless it is also the voice of duty, and wears "the Godhead's most benignant grace." The highest Fatherhood is the one that has the highest conception of the welfare of life, the moral basis of character, and the eternal principles on which all welfare rests. The sacrifice of Christ tells us that law and love are inseparable, and that the love of God must meet in some way the sense of right in God's heart and in man's.

Then we should present the Atonement in a way to give men *the assurance that sin is forgiven*, and lead them to act upon it. Forgiveness

needs to be taught, not as the sudden removal of the love of sin, the miraculous killing of the old habit of evil, nor as the removal of all the consequences, physical and moral, of our past sinful life, — but rather as the restoring of fellowship between the child and the Father. Sin estranges, it builds barriers, between the soul and God; and forgiveness says to men that there is nothing save your own unwillingness between your soul and God. It is the restoration of fellowship.

The Atonement should be presented in a way not only to give the assurance of forgiveness, but *to express a law of life.* The Atonement, the suffering for sin, is the expression of true Fatherhood, and such vicarious suffering is the law of life, the principle of spiritual progress. The sacrifice of Christ can be nothing *for* the soul, until it is accepted as the law of life *within* the soul. In other words, the Atonement must not be presented in a mechanical way, but as God's way of spiritual training.

Faith must be taught as man's part in appropriating the truth and life of Christ. It has various aspects in the teaching of Christ. It is sometimes synonymous with belief, again as equivalent to trust; now as a single act of the will, again as the attitude of the inner life, or even as the very capacity of the soul towards God.

So *faith* must be presented in every way to awaken the soul in man, to make him conscious of his capacity and responsibility. Faith must be preached as *belief*, the intellectual acceptance of Christ, the acceptance of evidence, not as demonstration (spiritual truth cannot be demonstrated), but as moral probability; the acceptance of that which promises the most light and life.

Faith must be preached as *aspiration, desire*, setting the affections upon the ideal that Jesus stands for, thinking upon Him, setting Him before our face, longing after His perfections, striving to love what He loves and hate what He hates.

Faith must be preached as the act of the will, *obedience* to the word of Christ, taking up the duties that belong to the Christian life, entering into the activities that belong to a servant of Christ. Faith may be best summed up as the *committal* of the life to the ideal of character and service taught by Christ.

Especially must the emphasis of faith be placed upon *obedience*, the acting out of each apprehension of truth. Here is the critical point of our teaching, to reach conscience and persuade the will to action. "He will never be a preacher," says Dr. Stalker, "who does not know how to get at the conscience. We are

preaching to the fancy, to the imagination, to intellect, to feeling, to will, and no doubt all these must be preached to; but it is in the conscience that the battle is to be won or lost." Men know more than they will do. In every way men must be led to venture upon the life of faith. "Obedience is the organ of spiritual knowledge." Life is a growth; and when it ceases to grow, decay begins. Gain is by use. Extirpation is the penalty of disuse.

The Holy Spirit is an essential truth of the Gospel and a means of the new life. It seems an unknown truth to most young men and is often left out of their thoughts and preaching. But the older men grow and the deeper their experiences of religion, the more they recognize the fact that the Christian life is a life of the Spirit; it is vain to look for the perfection of fruit without God's Spirit. And the word we speak and the service we render get their power from His influence.

It is essentially a truth of Christian experience. And the practical preaching of the truth centres around the exhortations, "Grieve not the Spirit" and "Quench not the Spirit." Remove whatever may hinder the coöperation of God's Spirit with yours, for thus only can come fulness and fruitfulness of life. Believe in the presence of God's Spirit, follow the inner impulse as the

divine voice. Act out every new apprehension of truth.

> "First find thou truth,
> And though she lead from beaten path of men
> To unknown ways;
> Her leading follow straight,
> And bide thy fate at heaven's gate."

And finally the *resurrection* has a place in the preaching of the Christian pulpit. It is the proof that the life of the Spirit, the life of faith and hope and love, is the deathless life; it is the proof that forgiveness is reasonable and possible with God, that a higher law rules than the endless round of sin and suffering, that the vicarious life is the victorious life, and that the cost of life, its heartbreaks and losses and partings, has its heavenly compensation. If a man be risen with Christ, if he seeks the life of the heavenly kingdom, he has the evidence of experience of the risen Christ, the promise and foretaste of the immortal life.

These truths, Christ's revelation of God, of man, his Sacrifice, faith, the Holy Spirit, and the Immortal Life, are the essential truths of the Gospel. Men will teach them in varying degree and proportion. The emphasis will be placed first on one truth and then on another according to the special condition of men. But in some way we should preach them all that men may

have life, the eternal life that is through Jesus Christ.

And two brief suggestions as to the spirit of teaching. Be *positive* and *constructive* in your preaching. Let your aim and spirit be the salvation of men as Christ's was. Take no pleasure in destroying even a superstitious faith, if you cannot put a purer one in its place. Some things cannot be shaken. Criticism cannot touch the things that make for salvation. And these are to be proclaimed with all the resources of mind and speech and with all the enthusiasm of love. Don't make your pulpit a game of bowls, to see how many errors or contrary opinions you can knock down. The polemical spirit is rarely the helpful spirit.

Put truth in a way to help men to live. If Christ is the centre and soul, then He will be more manifest. This is the test.

Believe that there is a spiritual capacity and desire in men to which the Gospel you preach bears exact fitness. The listless, the indifferent, the critic, the scorner, may listen to your word and render it fruitless. But the earnest hearer will be there. Men will listen to your word as for their life. Preach a Gospel that saves, and believe that men will respond to your word.

XII

THE SOCIAL MESSAGE

OUTLINE

A Saving Gospel must be for the Whole Man, and for all the Relations of Man.

The gospel message must be put in terms of social relation.

The two extreme views: one puts stress on the person, the other on the environment. The two extremes must be harmonized.

The Social Environment conditions the power of the Gospel in saving the Individual.

Social conditions are to be changed if men are to be reached by the truth.

Better social conditions are needed to sustain the new life.

Does Christianity mean the Redemption of the whole life of man?

Reasons why the interpreters of the Bible have failed to give its social teachings.

The Social Message an essential part of the Bible.

The first questions of the Old Testament social.

Moses was called to his work through his social sympathies.

The first law is essentially social.

The second law is based on social ideals.

The prophets are statesmen and reformers.

The Social Message of the New Testament seems more indirect and secondary.

Christ's social teachings are occasional.

He seems detached from social problems, and above them. Hence His vision.

His approach to society is by personal inner quickening.

Many critics deny Christ's authority in social life.

Frederic Harrison, John Stuart Mill, Mazzini.

Christ, as awakening the sense of social relation and responsibility, is back of social progress.

Christ's first message is social.

The Sermon on the Mount is the Magna Charta of society.

His doctrine of the Kingdom is a social vision.

His second coming is the completion of the Kingdom.

Social Conditions demand the Social Interpretation of Christianity.

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XII

THE SOCIAL MESSAGE

A MESSAGE that gives life must be for the *whole man*. Salvation is not a future term, but a present life. It is not only for life in a glorified state, but for men on the earth, as members of the society of man.

Men sometimes speak of "saving the soul" as though the soul were something that could be saved alone, as though the man were a disembodied spirit without passions and parts. In our desire to be true to Protestant and Evangelical theology, and put "the first things first," we have emphasized the individual out of his relations and made him an impossible creation, a fiction of our speculation. "A man alone is no man." A man is a man only as he is the member of a family, of a band of workers, of society, and of the State. We have exalted salvation by faith until, in popular thought, it is sometimes held that faith is the whole of salvation, "Saved souls" have ignored the Sermon on the Mount as though it were lacking in

spirituality. The emphasis for the moment should be changed and put where the age needs it, and the Spirit of Christ speaking through many prophetic voices is calling to us to make more real and living our message.

The personal, spiritual message of the pulpit must not be lessened one whit; its first work is to start and sustain the higher life of the Spirit: but the Gospel must also be expressed in terms of social relation if it is to inspire and direct the moral earnestness of men to-day.

There are two extremes among equally earnest men. One class says, — they might be called the individualists of the pulpit, — "Get the man converted and all's got." If a man is a new creature through Christ Jesus, he will work out for himself a new society. At the Pan-Presbyterian Council at Toronto, in a discussion on "The Relation of the Church to the Labor Problem," a notable preacher contended that the Church and the pulpit as such had absolutely nothing to do with the Labor Problem. Its sole business was with the individual, and that to secure a new spiritual life. The other class of teachers says: "There are conditions that make a decent life impossible, cesspools in which they who live must sin, or *will* sin and perish. Therefore change conditions and life will be true." These are two half truths. Each alone

is a practical fallacy; and it would be hard to say which might be the more dangerous. In Paternoster Row, London, on the windows of a shop of evangelistic literature, this question, in great, staring letters, was read: "Does the hog make the sty or the sty the hog?" We refuse to be fastened upon either horn of that dilemma. Our conception of the Gospel must be big enough to receive the truth in both statements; to unite the two half truths into a whole truth, — (in the words of Dr. Oswald Dykes) "the personal and religious salvation of the soul from sin, and the ethical and social salvation of the community from wrong and suffering." Christianity stands for the highest life or it stands for nothing. It is more than the rescue of the soul; it is God's way for the development and ennoblement of life. Something therefore is lacking in a Gospel that does not lead to the highest life. The pure waters of Christianity have been choked and defiled if they do not bless everything that they touch; if they do not give men better education, better conditions and quality and reward of work, more wholesome homes, a purer literature and time and taste to enjoy it, a happier recreation, and a more patriotic citizenship.

The *whole man* must be considered if the soul is to be reached. Mr. Jacob Riis has said that

children that live in a room without windows will probably grow up without windows to their souls. A Christian service that does not concern itself about the kind of houses in which people live lacks the first element of humanity.

Here is a bit of realism from a great Christian city: "There is not a heart which can feel that would not be torn and crushed could we know how many men and women there are to-night who have settled it, that things can never be worse for them in any conceivable world than they are in this. They no more fear death than they fear sleep; they have no more thought or concern about a life beyond the grave than they have about last year's weather. The great conceptions of the Fatherhood of God, the redemption of the race through Jesus Christ, the power of the new life of faith on the Son of God, are meaningless formulæ to untold men and women, fighting the battle from which there is no discharge but death; the grim struggle for sheer existence, with the chances at every turn of sickness, accident, and no work. These people are not infidel to the august and transcendent truths of religion. The pathos of it all is that they are past infidelity, they simply have no soul for them; it has dropped, fallen out. From their weariness and hopelessness has come an utter indifference, not only about the churches,

but the very God they are supposed to preach and teach." [1]

"If you will take the trouble to go through the section of the city where the operatives of some factory are housed, and see with your own eyes the actual conditions of their lives; if you will visit the homes where by pressure of want the mother is also thrust into the mill with several of her young children besides; if you will stand by as they take their pleasures and witness their poverty, not only in things material but in all the finer values of life, — you will need no commentary to tell you the meaning of that statement in Exodus as to the unresponsiveness of certain hearts because of the conditions of their toil. The spiritual tragedy which stands ugly and bare in whole sections of the worker's world is the most awful aspect of it. With these thousands of weary, beaten, and baffled men and women in mind, it seems like a cruel joke when we get together in our ministerial associations and read fancy little papers on 'How to reach the Masses,' deciding perhaps that it can be done with a little more music, or a bit more of advertising, or with more handshaking at the door of the Church. Thousands of them hearken not to the prophet 'for anguish of spirit and for cruel bondage.' The applica-

[1] Ambrose Sheppard, "Social Christianity," p. 90.

tion of Christian principles to social conditions is therefore demanded because their pathway to spiritual life is blocked for lack of it." [1]

Miss Jane Addams said a while ago to a company of ministers that there was little serious antagonism among workingmen to the Church, for to them the Church was nothing, — it did not come into their view.

The millions of foreign workers come from lands where the Church has been in alliance with the State and so is the symbol of aristocratic privilege and oppressive power, opposed to the hopes of the democratic movement. Many of them are socialists, and the socialists as a body, in spite of many notable exceptions, regard religion as a hindrance to the social state. In our voluntary churches, the financial support and control of the Church may be in the hands of men who are leaders in corporations or employers of labor and lacking in humanity and in sympathy with the labor movement. The hand toilers in all civilized lands (and they will always be in the large majority) stand in such a physical and social environment that it is hard to reach them with the message of the Gospel. It requires a social wisdom, a passion to reach the man, stripped of all the accidents of life, which is sometimes lacking in the pulpit, to quicken

[1] Brown, "Social Message of the Pulpit," p. 15.

this "apparent death of the spiritual needs and cravings, this life under the low sky, this numbness of heart and conscience." These conditions that absolutely prevent men from receiving the truth must be broken through, *changed* by the wisdom and devotion of Christian men, if the indifferent millions in our great cities that threaten to submerge our Christianity are to be reached. "No man is infidel to a great unselfish love."

And further than this the social message of Christianity must go. It must not only break down the barriers that separate men, furnish the conditions for receiving the truth, but furnish the conditions for sustaining the new life. The Christian life, feeble at first, must have wholesome conditions for its growth. You might as well expect to grow grapes on the edge of a sulphur pit as expect strong and beautiful characters in an atmosphere of physical and moral malaria. At a meeting of young men on the east side, New York, where an appeal was made for the higher life of the city, one of them drew this pitiful picture of the conditions in which he lived. "Now you go to your decent home in a quiet street, where no harm comes to you or to your wife and children. And we — we go with our high resolves, the noble ambitions you have stirred, to our tenements where

evil lurks in the darkness at every step, where innocence is murdered in babyhood, where mothers bemoan the birth of a daughter as the last misfortune, where virtue is sold into a worse slavery than ever our fathers knew, and our sisters betrayed by paid panders, where the name of home is a bitter mockery. These are the standards to which we go from here."

The words of Ambrose Sheppard, of Glasgow, who himself came from a factory boy to the pulpit, are none too strong: "Get men converted. Then put at their disposal the whole apparatus of moral, economic, and spiritual resource that they may strengthen into a saved society. How to win the masses of the people to Christ is no problem if it is to Christ we would win them. It is a question of faith, determination, prayer, passion, consecration."

Does Christianity mean the redemption of the *whole life of man?* Has the Gospel a message for man in every sphere and activity of his life? A message for man as a member of a social organism? What has Christianity to say about society is for the preacher to-day to know and to declare.

The main teachings of the Bible as to social problems are so plain, rise so above all questions of criticism, that a general student cannot err as to their meaning. It does not follow that the

social teaching of Christianity can be gained from the ordinary Bible helps. The great theologians and the men who have written our commentaries have been men of the study, men of an intellectual and religious class, who have not lived in conditions of killing toil and social peril, and so have not been driven to find a social remedy in the Gospel. We see what we have the eyes to see. The Bible is such a Book of life that only life in its fullest, most varied sense can interpret it. Many men have not caught the social passion, and so they do not see the social message. That is the only charitable way to account for the individualistic conception so dominant in theology and the Church. The eyes of their understanding have not been opened to the actual life of men, or they would find a message that should break the bands of men and set them free to understand and follow the path of life. We have a few noble interpreters and this number will grow, but they must come out of the toil and suffering of the poor.

Bishop Westcott has given us the social interpretation of Christianity, but he identified himself with the miners and factory men of North England. The Bishop of London has this emphasis, but he is known as the poor man's Bishop. Professor George Adam Smith has the prophet's spirit, but he is the friend of working

men, and is the elder of a church, not on the Avenue, but in the slums of Glasgow.

The Social Message of Christianity is not a by-product, but an essential part, vital to its true understanding. The two questions that stand on the opening pages of the Bible are the two fundamental questions always, — Where art thou? and Where is thy brother? Man's relation to God and man's relation to his fellows, from these two have developed all the questions of religion and morality. The one is individual and the other is social, and we have Christ's own word for it that one is as important as the other. But they are not two separate words. They never can be safely divided; they are one inseparable Gospel.

Moses, who stands back of law and Christian history, who is the personification of the old dispensation as Christ is of the new, was called to his work by his *social sympathies*. He was a statesman, the leader of a great national and economic revolution. The book of Exodus has been well called the history of a labor movement. The Law is as *social* as it is personal. Take the *first law;* the second half is all about social relations — life, its relations and duties in the family, in industry and the State. And in the first part of the Law, the Sabbath day stands as the bulwark of the poor, the first social force in

developing a just and humane civilization. It puts a limit on the hours of labor.

And when we turn to the second law, whatever be our critical theories, whether we regard it as Mosaic legislation or the work of the prophets, we must recognize its social ideals.

The land belonged to the people and could not be permanently alienated. The poor gleaned after the reapers, not as a matter of charity, but as a right coming from their part in the national domain. Interest was prohibited, because it would tend to make one class dependent upon another and so lessen the social equality of the people. Though slavery was permitted, the slave was a member of the family, and provision in the year of jubilee was made against perpetual slavery. There was no feudal class as among other people. A social democracy was the essential basis of Jewish life. The popular song of Wycklif's time shows the democratic interpretation of Jewish history:

> "When Adam delved and Eve span,
> Where was then the gentleman."

The striking contrast has been drawn between Jewish law and Roman law; Jewish law established the rights of man, with special regard for the poor, Roman law always had more respect for property and privilege. Such ideals grew

out of the deep religious life of the people. The man was more than material things.

The prophets are the great figures of the Old Testament, as they are the true interpreters and leaders of Jewish life. They were all statesmen, patriots, reformers. Their message is social and national, never private and personal. Every prophet arose through some social or national crisis and found his message through his social interest. Religion and social ethics with them are inseparable. They were the champions of the poor and the oppressed; they laid bare the social sins that made worship a mockery and that sapped the strength of the nation. They showed that the privilege of God's people rested solely on a righteous life, on principles common to all men; and through their social teaching Jehovah was revealed as the righteous one, the God of the whole earth. Jewish religion was vital as it was bound with the national hope; it grew narrow and mechanical as it lost the social aspects in the priestly.

When we come to the New Testament, the social message seems at first indirect and secondary. Christ's teachings have the personal accent; they are to bring man and God into fellowship. He seems at times detached from social problems, like one so intent upon a great mission, the eye so filled with a great vision, as to be enrapt in the

doing of it and not to see many things along the way.

His social teachings are certainly *occasional* more than systematic, the suggestion of principles and motives that men are to apply to themselves. For this reason equally earnest men have radically differed about His teachings.

But the very separation of Christ gives Him His wisdom. He is seemingly detached from social problems, not because He is indifferent to them, but because He stands above their dust and din. He sees man as God does. The very elevation of Christ gives Him His breadth of vision and His social wisdom. His occasional word comes with the power of unclouded vision. "The difference between Christ and the prophets," says Dr. Peabody, "was not so much one of social intention as of social horizon. The work of a reformer is for his own age, that of a revealer is for all ages."

And then Christ's approach to the age and its problems was not by a programme of reform, not by organizations and mass movements, but by personal, inner quickening. He made new men and sent them forth to make a new world. The seed of the new world were the children of the Kingdom, and this gave Christ His social power.

But to stop with this would be a most inadequate statement of Christ's position. Many

social critics seem unable to understand Christ's position. As to personal morality we admit, they say, that Christ was perfect. As to individual character, He is the ideal. But man must be tested by his relation to society. We live in the social age, an age of growing social consciousness. Can Christ be an example and guide of the modern world of work and play, of society and government?

Mr. Frederic Harrison, the English Positivist, whose earnestness no man will question, admits the power of Christianity for the moral life of the individual, but as to the political and industrial life of the present generation, charges that "Christianity not only fails, but is criminally complacent of the evils." John Stuart Mill, in his essay on Liberty, comparing Christian ethics with pagan, says, "While in the morality of the best pagan nations, duty to the state holds even a disproportionate place, infringing even upon the just liberty of the individual, in purely Christian ethics, that grand department of duty is scarcely noticed or acknowledged." And Joseph Mazzini, better entitled to the name prophet than most of the moderns, while holding Jesus supreme in "everything that concerns the heart and the affections," claims that as to the conception of the collective life of humanity, he falls "below the height of the idea of which a

glimpse has been revealed in our day." These are typical examples, and we must reverently ask, Does Christ meet the test? If Christ is to be tested by the life of His Church, it must be sadly confessed that the charge is partly true.

But it fails to interpret the finer influences of Christianity, and utterly fails to measure the true character and teaching of Christ: His picture of the new man and the new world, and the radical power of the principles of the new life.

Christ, as the soul of positive, outreaching goodness, condemning sin and quickening virtue, awakens the sense of personal relation and personal responsibility, and so is back of all true social conception and progress. The law of love which He lays upon every conscience, the enthusiasm for humanity with which He would fill every heart, makes Christianity a missionary force for the uplifting of the lowest. His first message, at Nazareth, which Drummond finely calls the programme of Christianity, is a social message. The Sermon on the Mount put into life would make a new heaven and a new earth. The Kingdom of God, His great vision and His great imperative, is a society of men who have the filial spirit towards God and the fraternal spirit towards men, and embraces every true interest of mankind. His coming again is

best interpreted as the triumph and completion of the Kingdom. The very nations shall bring their glory and honor into it.

It is true there are many different interpretations of the Kingdom of God, but to one who has the social consciousness of the age, the social view is the key that unlocks its meaning.

John the Baptist's preaching had the social tone, — righteousness and equality. Social wrongs were the real obstacles to the Kingdom, hence he prepared the way by preaching social righteousness.

Jesus received John's baptism and began His ministry with John's word, The Kingdom at hand. He had the prophet's spirit and continued the prophet's word.

He modified and corrected the common national hope of the Kingdom, showing that its coming was not through some great and sudden catastrophe, but through the law of growth and life. He taught the organic growth of the new society. It was a human and universal hope. The Kingdom was present, ever at work, not getting men into some future heaven, but making of earth an heavenly life. Jesus never views man apart from society. He has special interest in the poor and lowly. How full of social spirit are his parables! The simple teaching of the Fatherhood of God and so the brotherhood of

man is the most dynamic social force in the world. Eternal life is the loving, serving life. An anti-social life is the anti-Christian life. The highest fellowship with God is possible only to the life with the greatest humanity.

Christ is the first and the last, the goal of all moral and spiritual progress, the inspirer of the motive strong enough to break the barriers of pride and selfishness and bring the promised age of brotherhood. In the picture of Revelation, the battle between the Kingdom and the world, the root of David is alone worthy to open the book and loose the seals of human history.

The social message of the Gospel must be presented if the pulpit works with some of the strongest forces of life. There is something that environs and conditions the very message that we give, and that is the life of the age. The message must have the element of timeliness, if we are to work with the forces of God.

It is the social age. The Gospel must have the social emphasis to create a finer sense of duty and responsibility; to convince the world of righteousness; to make possible the religious life and growth of men; and to give earnest men the sufficient goal and motive for social progress. The social conditions that demand the social interpretation of Christianity make it a critical time for the Church. "If the Church would be

as significant as its past and its Founder make possible, it can no longer preach merely an individualistic salvation. It must educate the social sympathies of its children; it must teach that the question of right and wrong must have its answer from the counting-room as well as from the pulpit; it must train its members to trust their Christian impulse to side with whatever cause is true and beautiful and sane; it must teach that, if there can be no regenerate society without regenerate men, neither can there be regenerate men without a regenerate society. And therefore, for the sake of all, it must fulfil its central duty of throwing into an irreligious but generous age a host of sons and daughters filled with the fraternal enthusiasm of its Founder. This is the evangelicalism that our age needs; the Gospel of a man's saving his life, and the Gospel of the Kingdom of God."[1]

[1] Mathews, "The Church and the Changing Order," p. 180.

PART III

THE METHOD

"It were to be wished the flaws were fewer
In the earthen vessels holding treasure
Which lies as safe as in a golden ewer.
But the main thing is — Does it hold good measure? —
Heaven soon sets right all other matter."

— Browning.

XIII

EVANGELISTIC PREACHING

OUTLINE

The General Mission of the Preacher.
  The urgent message of New Testament preachers.
  Their varied appeals.
The Evangelistic and the Educational views of Salvation and of Preaching.
  Their union in a true ministry.
Relation of Evangelistic Preaching to the Church.
  Its power dependent on the spiritual life of the Church.
  The work for pastors and officers.
  The message to the Church.
The Truths of the Evangelistic Sermon.
  A more present and penetrative interpretation of sin.
  The personal work for men.
The Special Call for Pastoral Evangelism.
The Variety of Motives in Evangelistic Preaching.
The Marked Features of the Pastor-Preacher in his Evangelistic Work.

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XIII

EVANGELISTIC PREACHING

Emphasis has been placed upon the vital theory of preaching. The man comes first. The Gospel of the Incarnation can be proclaimed only by a spiritual manhood. Christ took infinite pains with the training of a few, and sent them forth to be His witnesses and messengers. And this is the unchanging law of the Evangel. Faith spreads by the words and touch of a vitalized person. The preacher is a witness and a messenger. He has a definite message to give, and this with a definite purpose to accomplish. The preacher is a man with a mission. The general idea of the mission of the preacher is plain and undisputed. It is to interest men to enter upon and persist in the Christian life. It is so to speak the truth that men shall be led into, and grow in, the life of the children of God, knowing more of God in Christ and His will, growing in the graces of character that belong to His children, performing the duties, entering upon the service that grows out of the relation of God and

man, building up a righteous character and a righteous society of men.

The preachers of the New Testament are ever urging men to be hearers and doers of the Word, to repent of sin and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, to take Him for teacher and Saviour and Lord. They are always trying to convince men of the importance of their message, and to persuade them to believe it, and heed it, and obey it at whatever cost. And to this end they appeal to a variety of motives, the moral need of man, the seeking and suffering love of God, the attractive power of the Cross, the cleansing and impelling force of the Christ-love, the moral beauty of Christ, the love of growth and perfection, the supremacy of duty, the privilege of fellowship and service, the danger of neglect, the glory that is to be revealed. They appeal to reason and conscience that they may influence the will. They picture to the imagination that the emotions may respond to the vivid perception, and desire give ease and strength to the choice of the will.

So in view of the large practical purpose of preaching, there are two kinds of preaching; the two shading into one another, often both found in the same sermon, and yet sometimes distinct, and each to be discussed by itself, — evangelistic and pastoral preaching.

We say that the mission of preaching is the salvation of men. But practically there are two views of salvation: the one regards it as a transaction, thinks of salvation as a definite act, and speaks of a saved man; the other regards it as a process of spiritual training, beginning sometimes in a definite conscious act of repentance and faith, but continuing through many acts, a life-process of learning, of discipline, of growth, leading to the perfect life. Christianity is God's way of making a man.

And so there are practically two very different views of preaching. The one is evangelistic. It emphasizes and reiterates a few primary truths that tend to conviction and conversion; it makes much of special service and revival methods; it aims at bringing men to confession of faith, and union with the Church; it is tempted to look for visible and tabulated results, is impatient at the slow and patient processes of instruction, the leavening work of the Gospel, and moves from place to place seeking for new conquests.

The other view lays stress upon the educational work of the pulpit, dwells upon Christian nurture, carefully instructs in the Scriptures, gains the respect and friendship of an increasing number of people, establishes permanent relations with the community, is willing to sow the

seed with faith in the certainty of the harvest, though another should reap it, applies the truth in every sphere of life, and tries to establish the Kingdom of God upon earth.

If one were compelled to choose between the two, there is no question which is the nobler and truer view of preaching, which has the more Scriptural aim. But we are not compelled to choose. Both should go together. Either alone is partial and imperfect, and may be exaggerated into an injurious extreme. Some men, no doubt, are naturally evangelists; their gifts and experiences fit them to arouse men and persuade to definite committal to the Christian life. And there may always be the need of a special class of evangelists in the Church. But the discussion is of the ordinary work of the ministry, and for the preacher who is also the pastor. And such a preacher should have the largest aim of the sermon in view, the beginning and continuance and perfection of the Christian life, salvation in its Gospel sweep and reach, a saved life and a perfected society.

How shall the preacher do the work of an evangelist? The preacher is a part of organized Christianity. He usually speaks from the pulpit of a church, and his word is mightily helped or hindered by the spiritual life of the church to which he ministers. The Church is crippled

in its influence by worldliness and sin. A formal and worldly Christianity has no power of transmission. In such lives the Spirit of God is neither desired nor works.

If the preacher is placed in a church lacking in spiritual vitality, satisfied with its condition and position in the community, a social religious club, with no yearning or outreaching for the lives of others, what can he do for the increase of spiritual life? The atmosphere will chill the evangelistic word. The church must have a renewal of the right spirit, before transgressors can be taught God's ways, and sinners shall be converted. Men will have no faith in a Gospel that does not make a better life. What can the preacher do? He can begin with himself, searching the heart in the light of the truth, and turning out evil; he can open every part of his life to the purifying and energizing influences of the Spirit. He can pray for men until he shall love them and yearn for their salvation. He can open his heart to the officers of the church. Dr. Newell, the author of "Revivals, How and When?" once said to his session: "My heart is breaking; I cannot live in this stupor. What can we do?" The officers of the church are generally the best Christian men in the community. Seldom will one of their number be found who will not answer the pastor's heart in

the desire for deepened spiritual life in the church. Pastor and officers can have earnest consultation together, and concert of prayer for the object desired. Wherever a Christian is found concerned for the church or community, bring that life into coöperation of prayer and labor. Talk with the Bible teachers, make them feel their place of influence, infuse into them your own hope and purpose. The pastor as the teacher of his teachers has an unsurpassed opportunity of unifying and deepening the religious life of his best co-workers. Do not multiply meetings — and so call undue attention to the machinery of evangelistic effort. Let the effort be directed solely to enlarged life; and when the renewed life of the church and the increasing attention of the people demand added services of the church, be ready to give them, and not before. Do not talk about revival or even pray much for it by name. Be faithful to the church. Do not yield to the temptation to preach to the people, before the church is ready to coöperate. Preach to Christians, searching, fearless, living sermons, and follow the same lines of truth in the mid-week service and in pastoral visitation. Use all the cogency of oft-repeated truth. The best evangelists and missioners insist upon this work of preparation, and for several weeks before

special services in any city, spiritual preparation is the theme; the inner life of the Christian, the need of repentance, a higher standard of living, personal duty to men, these are the themes, reiterated from the pulpit, and in lecture room and in ministers' meetings. It is preparing the way of the Lord.

The parochial missions in the Episcopal Church emphasize, in the same way, the necessity of spiritual preparation. "The specific character of a parochial mission is the renewal and deepening of the spiritual life in it." Such spiritual preparation on the part of pastor and officers will lead certainly to a renewed life in the church. Men will feel the new vitality. The Holy Spirit will press the truth upon them, through the witness of new life. The earnest, attentive, inquiring spirit will be abroad. The atmosphere of the church will be right so as to give life to the message of the pulpit, and be a fit home for the new life the message aims to give.

Now the truth preached must aim directly at repentance and faith. Not that each sermon should be evangelistic in form. A sermon may do more for the Kingdom of Christ by increasing the knowledge of the truth, or establishing in practical righteousness, than the most fervent appeal to sinners. But all truth is for life, and the sermon answers its end only by promoting

larger spiritual life. It must have a direct and intense purpose to reach the lives of men, and such purpose will often preach the truth that calls for decision, — the acts of repentance, faith, and obedience.

The central doctrines of God, the soul, sin, and judgment, the Atonement, repentance, faith, obedience, must be dwelt upon, and so dwelt upon that they shall possess the mind. It will be interesting to notice the essential agreement of Protestant and Romanist, as to the truth to be used in evangelizing methods. Says Dr. McGlynn, of St. Stephen's Church, New York: "As regards the best methods of reaching the hearts of the people and effecting the greatest spiritual good, I have no doubt that, whether in missions, or in the ordinary parochial preaching, the best preaching is that which gives plain, simple, homely instruction of Gospel truths on the simple, ordinary duties of the various states of life. It is the urging of the motives for contrition for sin, to be found in the suffering which Christ underwent for sin, in the judgments which He threatens, in the unreasonableness and turpitude of sin as revealed by divine truth, and especially in urging the highest of all motives, of filial love of God, which drives out fear, and makes the service of God a pleasure and a delight to His children."

Does not sin need a more present and practical interpretation? The organic nature of life, the increased interdependence and complexity of society, have made old conceptions of sin inadequate. The blood of others rests upon too many things that we use, the prosperity of the Christian world is built too much upon the pinched and crippled lives of the little ones with whom Christ identifies Himself. The convincing word is one that shall awaken the individual in relation to the corporate life, making the sin of society press on the conscience of each. The awakened social sense will give a deeper consciousness of sin and need and lead to the Christ, whose sacrifice is the law of the new life. We must expect conversions from such preaching. Is the attitude of the ministry one of expectancy? Would not a simple heart cry for salvation startle some men as they come down from the pulpit?

We must watch the slightest tokens of conviction, and have others interested in such cases, and be prompt and wise to use the opportunity. Let it be known by an occasional hearty word from the pulpit that you will be in the study after service, or at home a certain hour, to talk with any one concerning the religious life. Let the word be given in such a way that the timid and faltering may be attracted, that

its acceptance will not mean necessarily interest in the question of personal salvation.

We must strive by personal effort, attractive and forceful preaching, and the most efficient church methods, to reach and persuade the careless and the indifferent. The right kind of pastoral work comes in here as a powerful factor. The personal conversation should be had at some time with every man of the parish. And the right relation to men, the reputation for sincerity and humanity and sacrifice, will make such conversation a welcome word. The evening service should be largely for the people. If it is not possible to draw in some of those not members of a regular congregation, if the evening audience were only a small part of the regular attendance, it would be a serious question whether the evening service should not be given up for some other place or work.

It may be that we have too much preaching to the same people. The Church would gain if more preachers were free to devote the evening to an aggressive evangelism. However, in most churches in village and city, the problems of the evening service can be solved by energy, wisdom, and spiritual devotion. Enlist the young people to bring in the young people; make the most of Christian song. Give the people a larger part in the service. Let the prayers be

simple, brief, and fervent. The sermon may not be always evangelistic, but often so. And brevity here will be a virtue. Fifteen minutes of simple, direct, bright, intense speech, on some great Scripture truth, some great problem of life and duty, will be enough. Sometimes, especially during the winter months, the evening service can be followed by an after meeting not longer than fifteen minutes, when close contact can be had with interested persons, and personal conversation can be held with all who wish. Such a service will impress the Church constantly with its direct spiritual mission, and make the community feel that its spiritual welfare is the thought and prayer and effort of the Church.

The office of the evangelist is to be recognized in the Church; and his special work in destitute and waste places, in the union efforts in our cities, with definite purpose to reach the neglected and indifferent classes, is to be honored. Some men are gifted in the truth and method of persuasion. No single teacher has the largeness of nature and truth to reach all men. And the evangelist may bring to light the truth long known. The age calls for men, "fitted as instruments to use what the people believe and know, in order to bring them to a decision for God."

But a passing evangelism is not the chief instrument for the growth of the Kingdom. The

evangelism of Christian lands depends upon the instruction of a stable pulpit. And the pastor, in most cases, is best fitted to do this work. He has permanent relations to the community; men know his life and prize his friendship; and this personal touch can remove prejudice and indifference, and give the sympathetic knowledge to speak the fitting word. The mass-movements in religion of this social age fail to reach the masses. Men are to be won within the community, not from without, by the constraints and inducements of friendship, by the personal touch that symbols the Messianic entrance into the hopes and fears of men, their toils and struggles and sorrows, their sin and aspiration. Every preacher should have the ambition to be a soul-winner, to do the work of an evangelist.

"The pastor must not forget those unsatisfactory and unsatisfied ones who, at any given moment, are probably the majority of his parishioners. The parish priest is always tempted to forget them, especially in great town-parishes, where he has extensive organizations to manage, and things move prosperously along, and the numbers of communicants are so large as to weaken the sense of their being small in proportion to what they should be. We need an increasing number of ministers who keep steadily before them the duty that they owe

to the less promising portion of their flock. How seriously the Ordinal insists upon this part of our duty: 'Never cease your labor, your care and diligence, till you have done all that lieth in you to bring all that are committed to your charge unto that agreement in the faith and knowledge of God, that there be no place left among you either for error in religion, or for viciousness in life.'" [1]

A word should be said as to the variety of motives to be appealed to in evangelistic preaching. Says Dr. W. M. Taylor, in his "Ministry of the Word," "To tell men over and over again that they ought to repent and believe the Gospel, to entreat them, no matter with what vehemence, to accept Christ, will rarely produce any real results. I doubt whether we sufficiently consider the variety of motives which bring men to Christ, or the kind of preaching which is likely to call these motives into vigorous and effective action."

Some men begin the Christian life under a sense of duty. There is no keen sense of sin, no fear of penalty, but Christ appeals to conscience, and He is obeyed. We should so present the moral greatness of Christ that obedience to Him will be seen as the supreme duty.

Other men are dissatisfied with themselves,

[1] Mason, "The Ministry of Conversion," p. 21.

especially youth, and they know not why. Common things do not appeal to them. There is a time in the life of boys and girls when they reach beyond self after some other food. It is the unconscious call of God, the stirring of the higher life. They are capable of love and devotion, if Christ can be presented in the fulness and glory of His life. It is the appeal to moral imagination. Such studies in the psychology of child-life and youth as President G. Stanley Hall, Professor Coe, and Dr. Starbuck, should make the preacher's work more rational and effective. Happy the man who uses the tide of life to bear the soul on towards God.

There are natures that early have strong instincts for the spiritual. From love of nature, of poetry, of music, they are idealists; they feel the mystery of life and the presence of God. And they are easily won by Christ as the revelation of God and the giver of life. To such, the mystical elements of the Gospel make the strongest appeal.

Another class have a sense of shame over moral failure. They know the power of sin. They have tried again and again and have failed, and they are in danger of moral despair. Christ as the giver of victory, as the power over evil, is the Gospel that they need. Some are drawn to Christ by His moral perfection, and others by

His love. Children, especially, are easily won by the story of the Cross. But the majority of men are indifferent, or absorbed, not conscious of moral guilt or sensitive to spiritual truth. How to awaken the sense of need and desire is the real problem of the preacher. Sometimes by hunting a particular sin out, as Edwards did; sometimes by such an ideal of goodness that the soul stands condemned before it; and sometimes the sacrifice of Christ will give the heart of flesh.

How far shall we appeal to fear? Men are not easily frightened, and the appeal has lost something of its force. It is not the highest motive. Yet it is an unmistakable appeal of Christ, and dull and hardened natures may never awake save by the terrible picture of the penalty of sin, "the worm that dieth not, and the fire that is not quenched." Sin is something to be afraid of.

The man who can picture the growth of the soul in evil with a vivid realism, put the inner life and tendency on the canvas before the eyes, will make his word "living and active, . . . and quick to discern the thoughts and intents of the heart."

Such realism will be found in Bushnell's sermons, "The Capacity of Religion Extirpated by Disuse" and "The Power of an Endless Life." Phillips Brooks was a master interpreter of life.

The moral decline of young manhood was never more truthfully portrayed than in his sermon, "Unspotted from the World." "Your grown-up boy is wise in bad things which he used to know nothing about. He has a hard conscience now, instead of the soft and tender one he used to carry. He is scornful about sacred things, instead of devout as he was once. He is no longer gentle, but cruel; no longer earnest, but flippant; no longer enthusiastic, but cynical. He tolerates evils that he used to hate. He makes excuses for passions that he once thought were horrible. He qualifies and limits the absolute standards of truthfulness and purity. His life no longer sounds with a perfectly clear ring or shines with a perfectly white lustre."[1]

If evangelistic preaching is to be real, free from partial views of life and mediæval views of truth, we must have a growing conception of Christ's view of the worth of man. The sense of the value of the soul will make the Gospel a divine certainty, save the preacher from despising or ignoring any man for whom Christ died, give proper significance to single truths, and single acts and experiences, and maintain their proper relation to the whole nature of man and the immeasurable reach of salvation.

We do not see Christ clearly if men do not

[1] Vol. I, 175.

become more precious to us and we have a growing passion for souls. "Go and try to save a soul and you will see how well it is worth saving, how capable it is of the most complete salvation. Not by pondering upon it, nor by talking of it, but by serving it you learn its preciousness. And so the Christian, living and dying for his brethren's souls, learns the value of those souls for which Christ lived and died." [1]

In conclusion, what features should mark the work of the pastor-preacher who would also do the work of an evangelist?

He should preach sermons repeatedly that aim at repentance and faith, at immediate decision for the Christian life. The note of urgency will often be heard in the full giving of the Evangel.

From pastoral experience, a list should be made of those who seem to have religious conviction and feeling, who should take the step of faith. A study should be made of their natures and environment, and preaching especially adapted to their condition.

Certain periods of the Church, as communion seasons, may direct the form of pulpit teaching, and sermons given designed to bring men into faith and into the fellowship of the Church. Such sermons should be kept free from conventional appeals, marked by entire naturalness

[1] Brooks, "Lectures on Preaching," p. 280.

and reasonableness, the peculiar expression from the study of individual natures and motives.

Evangelistic teaching should be followed by the personal work of the pastor. "Hand-picked fruit is the best." Private conversation, the frank word of love and desire, is the way to make truth effective, and action controlling and permanent.

Wise evangelism will always be built upon thorough instruction. The call to action will come from convinced reason and a clear sense of duty. The aim will not be to swell the roll of the Church, but increase the Kingdom of God.

XIV

EXPOSITORY PREACHING

OUTLINE

A Teaching Ministry.
- Its power.
- Its objects.
- The types of sermons.

Difficulties of the Expository Sermon.
- Popular desire for persuasion.
- The changed views of the Bible and of life.
- Can it be made interesting?

Definition of the Expository Sermon.
- Two features: (1) A connected passage. (2) Interpretation for present life.

The Advantages of the Expository Sermon.
- Preacher and hearer brought into contact with the Spirit.
- Biblical knowledge increased.
- Intelligent, balanced views of truth.
- The preacher enabled wisely to discuss all needful topics.
- Enriches the preacher.

Examples of the Expository Method.

Suggestions as to Expository Method.
- Selection of passage.
- Rhetorical order.
- Singleness of thought and purpose.
- Use of illustration, argument, appeal.
- Variety of treatment.

The Formation of the Habit.

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XIV

EXPOSITORY PREACHING

The preacher is first and chiefest the teacher. It is his duty to make known the truths of Christ in such a way as to form right habits of thought, conduct, worship, and work, to train a righteous and godly life. Misconceptions and prejudices must be removed, religious indifference and moral stupor broken, high ideals of life held up and divine motives brought to bear, reason enlightened, conscience awakened, the will directed to right conduct; and all this implies the careful teacher. Eloquence may render a doubtful service, and enthusiasm become a fickle fire; but the clear and connected presentation of Scripture truth is the means of a rational faith and an abiding Church.

Why are the Scotch the most genuinely religious people of modern times; and, small in numbers and unfavored, the leaders of the English-speaking world in every realm of higher thought? Because Scotland for generations has had a thoughtful and devoted pulpit, whose chief

work has been the thorough teaching of the Word of God. And in comparison, the fickle religious life of our own land, too often stimulated by sensations and swept by novelties of doctrine, is the product of a pulpit eager for immediate result, and impatient of the long processes of spiritual instruction. There is special call to-day for a teaching ministry. "The teachers shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars, for ever and ever."

Four specific objects may be gained by a teaching ministry: growth in spiritual knowledge; growth in Christian graces; light, encouragement, comfort, to the doubting, weary, and sorrowing; knowledge of duty and ways of Christian work, to present the complete idea of Christian service.

We have to preach a life, and we cannot be content until we help men to fashion their own lives after the divine pattern. Pastoral teaching is for the formation of right moral habits, and for the discipline and direction of the spiritual life. It includes at least four types of sermons, the expository, doctrinal, apologetic, and ethical. The classification, while in no sense strict, may be justified on practical grounds. Every message of the pulpit should be expository, the effort to interpret and apply some

word of God. The topical sermon, the most frequent form in the American pulpit, differs only in the freedom and individuality of its method. Doctrinal, apologetic, ethical sermons may all be expositions, or treated in the topical spirit. However, pastoral teaching demands special attention to that form of the sermon in which the element of instruction is stronger than that of persuasion.

Expository sermons are the hardest to give, and the most needed by the Church to-day. It is true that the people do not ask for such preaching with any united or insistent voice, but their need is none the less great. The objection will be made, we do not need interpretation of the Bible in the pulpit; there are other ways for such instruction; we know now more than we do; but we need to be roused and kindled with eloquence. But the many will never have religious teaching save through the pulpit, and the instability of faith, the low standards of practice, the "itching ears" of multitudes, the followers of any sensation monger, prove that the pulpit by more thorough instruction must establish the Church in the faith.

A more serious objection is found in the changed attitude towards the Scriptures. As religious literature they are to be interpreted in their spirit, not letter, not in the authority

of single passages, but as the record of religious movements and the progressive revelation of God. This makes the expository method, the dealing with words and clauses, useless, it is claimed. Noble religious teachers say that the day of the expository sermon is over. The pulpit must use a larger, freer interpretation.

Then it is held that life is a continuous revelation of God, and that the removal of the line between sacred and secular, the recognition of the spiritual element in all life, lessens the importance of expository sermons, and places emphasis upon the great topics of religion.

The changed attitude towards the Bible and life does call for a new spirit and method in exposition, but cannot change the need of such preaching. The present Bible is a more living message, Christ is no less Saviour and Master; and the exposition of the lives and events through which God has spoken, especially the interpretation of Christ the living Word, must ever be the divinest way of awakening and training the spiritual life of men, and in making men realize that God is in His world.

But can the expository sermon be made interesting? And the question is an implied objection. Spurgeon tells of a series of sermons on the Epistle to the Hebrews in his boyhood.

The writer, he says, in that Epistle "urges us to suffer the word of exhortation — and we did." But there is no reason why this kind of preaching should be dull. "If we put into our expository work the fruits of our hardest thinking, our most affluent reading, and our most spiritually sensitive feeling," the Word will stand forth in something of its rich and inspiring life. It will have unity and direction as the Word of God always has. And it will give a freer, fuller life than the unlimited mind of any man, however creative, can of itself secure. Dr. Dale speaks of a sermon that closed his Exposition of the Epistle to the Galatians, a summary of the truth of the Epistle, as "quite as exciting as a fiery pamphlet on some question of modern party politics." The difficulties are partly removed if we have a generous conception of expository preaching.

What is expository preaching? Dr. W. M. Taylor, in his "Ministry of the Word," seems to confine it to the continuous and consecutive treatment of a book of the Bible. "By expository preaching, I mean that method of pulpit discourse which consists in the consecutive interpretation and practical enforcement of a book of the sacred canon."

Dr. Dale, of Birmingham, has practically the same idea of the expository sermon, when he speaks of his own expository sermons, "in

which I carefully explained and illustrated, clause by clause, verse by verse, a group of chapters, or a complete book of Holy Scripture." This is too limited a view of the expository sermon, both as to its matter and method. It need not be consecutive treatment of a book, and it is not compelled to proceed clause by clause, and verse by verse. Such definition needlessly restricts the freedom and variety of the sermon, and makes it technical and mechanical.

It is enough to say that the expository sermon is marked by two features: (1) It takes for its text a connected passage; more than a clause or verse; a Psalm, a parable, an argument or portion of an argument, a scene or narrative. It may have no connection with other sermons; it may stand by itself; but it takes a connected passage for its treatment. Then (2) it seeks to give in a clear and forcible way the meaning of the passage, the truth and lessons rightly taught by it. It is a faithful answer to the question, — "What is the mind of the Spirit in this passage; and what is the truth here for present life?" It is so "to combine the past and the present, to make the past such a mirror of the present, that what is said of the one shall have a powerful influence in moving the other." This gives great freedom and adaptation in the

choice of a passage, and also in its method of use within the limits of the material given.

What are the advantages of the expository sermon? It is more apt to bring preacher and hearer into direct and immediate contact with the mind of the Spirit. If this is the result, the exposition must be vital. It must be of such a nature that the living Word shall speak; not the curious explanation of a dead parchment, but the message of the ever present Spirit.

When we are trying diligently to make the Scripture live with the power of Him who first inspired its writers, we are more apt to bring the hearers into direct and immediate contact with His mind. We are seen to be striving, not after human fancies and theories, but after the Word of God. No preacher will attempt expository preaching unless he has a profound sense of a divine message in the Bible. If its best words are only the refinements of human reason concerning spiritual things, he will not have the patience of the Biblical student. He will wish to range in what are to him freer and broader fields. And on the other hand, where a congregation delight in expository preaching, it implies an unusual respect for the Scriptures and interest in their truth. If we are faithful expositors, we shall have the authority of the Word in our sermons.

And amid all the conflict of opinions, the dim and misty strivings of the human heart, surely men are longing for just this, the authority of a Divine word. We must make men feel that we have the Word of God. Oratory is nothing, even genius is a wandering fire, without this impression and assurance that we are bringing God's thought to men. The pulpit is not the platform nor the stump. It is not above the same laws of thought and style, but it must depend upon a higher source for its power.

Expository preaching will promote the Biblical knowledge of the preacher and the hearer. The preacher first: he feels that he is to be a student of the Bible first of all. The Biblical idea of the preacher is the learner. We know a few things now, by study and experience, the rudiments of the Gospel. It is not true that we are unfit to preach and ought to resign our commissions unless we are masters of all the points of doctrine and of Bible knowledge. But we are to go on for ourselves, adding to our knowledge, mastering detail after detail, period after period, book after book — so that we may, like a wise householder, bring forth things new and old. But how shall we do this? Is it feasible for the young man, with the complex life of to-day, the multiplying demands of pulpit and parish, to carry on lines of Biblical study, independent of

the pulpit, and with no immediate relation to it? The experience of most young preachers gives the answer. They need to so arrange their work that the study shall help the pulpit, and the plan of preaching shall demand and promote systematic Bible study. Courses of expository preaching will do this. And such method will make the preacher an expert in religion, and his message one of increasing weight and power.

Then the people need the systematic teaching implied in the expository sermon. Are not the hazy views of truth due in large measure to the loose and desultory method of the pulpit? To-day the sermon may be from the sermon on the Mount; to-morrow from Genesis, and then from Isaiah or Revelation, without any historical or doctrinal connection. Lack of order and system is one of the gravest faults of the American pulpit, the inevitable result of an unscholarly ministry. Closely allied to this is the false habit of regarding single clauses and even words of Scripture by themselves, and so disregarding the general current of its history and argument. It is not a curiosity shop or a mere storehouse of texts, it is a divinely governed history. God has spoken to the race through great redemptive facts, and with these facts the truths are inseparably connected.

"Now the true expository method is likely to lead people to read the Bible as they read other books, and to look not merely at separate thoughts and fragments of separate thoughts, at isolated facts and the most insignificant circumstances connected with isolated facts; but at facts and thoughts in masses, and as they are grouped by the Scriptural writers themselves." [1]

Expository preaching promotes an intelligent, balanced view of Christian truth. Such preaching secures variety in the teaching of the pulpit and breadth of truth. A mere topical preacher will soon run dry. The inventiveness of no single mind is great enough to meet the variety of human needs. It is said that Dr. John Dick of Scotland, when a young man, went to a neighboring minister in despair. "What shall I do? I have preached all I know to the people, and have nothing else to give them; I have gone through the catechism, and what have I more?" "The catechism?" his friend replied; "take the Bible, mon, it will take you a long time to exhaust that."

Exposition keeps the great truths from being stereotyped, for they are presented with ever new relations in the Scripture. Take the doctrine of regeneration in John iii. 3 and James i. 18. The new relation throws new light upon the cen-

[1] Dale, "Lectures on Preaching," p. 232.

tral truth. Here, the simple central truths of the Gospel are set in an infinite variety of forms, and we shall never exhaust the variety. The only way to escape from the weariness and profitlessness of the repetition of a few evangelical doctrines is to be interpreters of the Scriptures, true to every fact, every teaching and lesson of their pages.

In the course of systematic exposition, the minister will treat some subjects from which he would otherwise shrink. Details of duty and of sin may be pursued without danger of prejudice and needless offence. They will be received as not simply the preacher's word, but as imbedded in the very course of Scripture truth.

"It will surprise one to see what wealth and variety of topics will come up for illustration in discussion, by means of expository preaching. A thousand subtle suggestions and a thousand minute points of human experience, not large enough for the elaborate discussion of the sermon, and yet, like the little screws of the watch, indispensable to the right action of the machinery of life, can be touched and turned to advantage in expository preaching. There are many topics which, from the excitement of the time and from the prejudice of the people, it would be difficult to discuss topically in the pulpit, yet, taken in the order in which they are found in

Holy Writ, they can be handled with profit and without danger. The Bible touches all sides of human life and experience, and Scriptural experience gives endless opportunities of hitting folks who need hitting. The Squire can hardly stamp out of church for a 'Thus saith the Lord.'" [1]

In this method the preacher will acquire a great store of material which he can use for other purposes. He will never need to hunt for texts, foolishly wasting time and spirit, but texts will fairly press for treatment, more than he can ever use, as his study continues. Great topics of religion will rise more and more, in their Scripture induction, gathering constant accretion from study and experience. And a multitude of glimpses and side lights, of shining words and apt phrases and illustrations, will come to his hand.

"For many years, in my own ministry, I have never known a time when I had not in my mind a large number of subjects, each of which was eager to receive my first attention, but which I was compelled to detain, that it might wait its turn. And so the question has been, not what can I get to preach, but rather, which one of many topics has the most pressing claims and the most immediate interest? Now, I trace the

[1] Beecher, "Yale Lectures," Vol. I, p. 225.

existence of this state of things to my constant habit of expository preaching, on at least one part of every Lord's day." [1]

The freedom and variety of the expository method may be seen in the study of the following plans:

I. Isaiah xxxv. 3–10.

Theme: The King's Highway.

1. Its characteristics, a way of holiness.
2. The objections to the way; and the answers.
   - *a.* The way is a desert.
     But there are springs of water, oases in the desert; and even the mirage shall become a pool.
   - *b.* The path is obscure.
     No; it is the King's highway, so plain that a simple man, even a child, can easily keep it.
   - *c.* It is a dangerous way.
     Nothing shall harm you therein.
     "No lion shall be there," etc.
   - *d.* But the way is long, shall we ever reach the Fatherland?
     "The ransomed of the Lord shall return," etc.

Conclusion: Therefore strengthen the weak knees. Be strong, fear not.

[1] Taylor, "The Ministry of the Word," p. 175.

In this plan the eighth verse is taken as the key of the passage and furnishes the theme. The plan is true to the historical fact, but the past is used as a mirror of the spiritual. So the whole is a present message, and the plan uses or discards elements of the passage that suit the present purpose, and likewise uses the utmost liberty of order.

II. Matt. v. 1–12.

Theme: The Christian Conception of Character.

1. It enthrones the passive virtues.
2. It corrects the view that life is tested by ordinances and activities.
3. It is not a natural growth; the acquirement of supernatural virtue.
4. An ideal to be realized. "Shall be."

Instead of discussing the passage, verse by verse, an easy and natural thing to do, the plan finds the underlying principles that have expression and illustration in the beatitudes, and discusses each in the light of the whole passage. Such a method gives singleness and suggestiveness, and combines rhetorical effectiveness with exposition.

III. Matt. xiii. 1–9. (Plan of Dr. C. H. Parkhurst.)

Theme: Responsibility of the Hearer.

Introduction: The significance of the first parable, and the two principles implied by it, viz.: The Word of God implanted, not innate, and the oral method of making the truth known.

Development: The four kinds of hearers, following the exact order of the parable, and Christ's interpretation.

The individuality of the plan is in the suggestive introduction, that puts the parable in a new light, and in placing the finger on the last verse as the key to the whole. And the development is made unforgettable by the vivid illustrations and the powerful appeal to conscience.

IV. Matt. viii. 5–13. (F. W. Robertson.)

Theme: Faith of the Centurion.

Introduction: Christ emphasized faith; analysis of its nature and power.

1. The faith commended.
   a. First evidence of its existence: tenderness to his servants, caring for "our nation."
   b. Second evidence: His humility, "Lord, I am not worthy." Christ calls this faith. How faith and humility are the same.

c. Third evidence: His belief in a living will. "Speak the word only." The living will out of sight, the highest form of faith.

2. The causes of the commendation.

a. The centurion, a Gentile, unlikely to know revealed truth.

b. A soldier with peculiar temptations. He made his difficulties means of religious life.

Conclusion: The genuine wonder of Jesus, mark of genuine humanity. Our brother.

The plan is significant for its suggestive interpretation of the scene, taking out and naming the distinctive parts, and making all the details contribute to these. The plan is weak in its conclusion, not the telling truth of it all, but simply a suggestion attached.

V. Acts iv. (W. M. Taylor.)

Theme: Peter before the Council.

1. The orderly narrative of the chapter. The two classes of antagonists; result, Peter and John in prison; brought before the Council; their bearing and spirit; their release.

2. Practical inferences.

a. If we are really Christ's we must expect to meet antagonism.

b. We shall remind the world of Christ.
c. The one rule of our lives will be to hearken unto God.
d. Our chosen fellowship will be with those who are Christ's.
e. We shall betake ourselves in every trial to the throne of grace.

Biographical sermons are often the truest expositions. There is something timeless in biography. The revelation of a life is a word for all times. God's Word has come through living men, and to make these men live again is a certain way of giving reality to their word. Dr. Taylor is noted among preachers for his study of Bible characters. His plans have a certain sameness that only his rich mind and fervent spirit can make interesting. He gives the narrative or scene with all the wealth of modern historical study, and then follows with a series of practical observations. The method sometimes leads to the separation of life and lesson, and the lack of unity and singleness of impression, which belong to life and the greatest speech.

VI. John xvi. 12–15. (Alexander Maclaren.)

Theme: The Guide into all Truth.
Introduction: The promise of the Comforter, the last expansion here.

1. The avowed incompleteness of Christ's own teaching, v. 12.

   Reconciliation with xv. 15, as germ and flower. Why Christ's teaching incomplete? 12 (b). Revelation measured by the moral and spiritual capacity of man to receive. The same principle holds about us.

2. The completeness of the truth into which the Spirit guides. v. 13.

   a. The personality, designation, office of the new teacher.

   b. He guides. "Into all truth."

   No promise of omniscience, the assurance of gradual acquaintance.

   c. "Not speak of Himself": relation of the Spirit as teacher to Jesus, and of Jesus to the Father.

   d. "Things to come." This promise applies in a unique fashion to the original hearers. The inspiration and authority of the Apostles.

   Modified application to us.

3. Our Lord's pointing out the unity of these two. v. 14, 15. "He shall glorify me." No man. 14 (a). All is Christ. 14 (b). No new revelation, the interpretation of the old.

4. Lessons.
   a. Seek the divine Spirit given to all.
   b. Use the book that He uses.
   c. Try the spirits.

This plan is a good example of Alexander Maclaren's orderly and unified exposition. He gives the exact truth of the passage in the proportion and emphasis of the writer. Not a detail is omitted and yet they are so massed that they lift up the great teachings of the passage, and these together make the singleness of his message. He stands out among modern preachers for his accurate scholarship, spiritual-mindedness, and the creative imagination that sees the truth and makes all things minister to its expression. If young men would master the art of expository preaching, let them study the work of Alexander Maclaren.

Suggestions as to Expository Method.

1. Select a passage that has a central thought, or take out of the passage some important truth for your theme, and discuss it in the light of the entire passage. Study variety in the choice of passage, a parable, a miracle, a narrative, a scene, a poem, a doctrine, a duty, a character, an inductive study of some great truth, a book in course; the expository ser-

mon need not suffer from sameness of choice.

2. Secure a true rhetorical order of treatment. The passage will often be in the most natural and effective order, but if not, rearrange or select such as are best for your use.
3. Remember that the chief business of exposition is to so present truth that it shall make its strongest appeal to life.

Therefore the explanation should be unmistakable and positive. It should not leave the hearer in doubt. Where there are several views, one should be chosen that seems the most reasonable and practical. The details of exegesis should not cover up the central thought, but lift it up, illuminating and enforcing it. The sermon should not be a mass of chips, but a finished work; not processes but results are demanded in the sermon. "This or that detail should not be pursued or elaborated, however important in itself, if it does not enforce and illuminate the central idea."

The weakness of some pulpit expositions is their closeness and compactness of thought, not simple enough and bold enough in outline for the popular mind;

clear enough for the eye, but not for the ear; lacking in singleness of thought and in the expansion of the thought through varied repetition so as to make the message interesting and effective to many hearers. Make the exposition as short as you can, consistent with clearness and vividness, and then pass to the practical discussion and application of the truth, and make this full and effective.

4. Use every power of illustration, argument, and appeal in the practical part. The expository sermon should not fall into the dry and didactic manner. Illustration especially will be needed to make the instruction bright and persuasive. It must be far removed from mere commentary. The material must be abundant and choice, the best results of reading and culture.
5. Study variety of treatment. The mode of discussion will depend upon the nature of the passage as truly as in the topical method. There was a marked change in the preaching of Dr. Dale. At first, his expositions were verse by verse. Afterward, he read the passage and commented on needed points, and

then preached from a single text. It was more rapid and effective, gave broad historic views, and escaped the evils of a microscopic criticism — the examining of Niagara, drop by drop. Variety may be specially used in modes of application. Three methods are always open to the preacher: (1) Exposition and the lesson. (Guthrie, Chalmers, Maclaren, Taylor.) (2) Application after each part. (Spurgeon, Parker.) (3) The appeal woven with the entire fabric of the sermon. It were well if the preacher were more often skilled to do the last, the highest form of teaching. Hawthorne's words may have proper reference to the sermon. "When romances really do teach anything, it is usually through a more subtle process than the ostensible one. The author has considered it hardly worth his while relentlessly to impale his story with its moral, as with an iron rod, or rather as by sticking a pin through a butterfly — thus at once depriving it of life, and causing it to stiffen in an ungainly and unnatural attitude. A high truth, indeed, fairly, finely, and skilfully wrought out, bright-

ening at every step, and crowning the final development of a work of fiction, may add an artistic glory, but is never any truer, and seldom any more evident, at the last page than at the first." [1]

6. Begin with single experiments, as a miracle or parable, and repeat it until you form the habit and you know how to make such work interesting and effective. Do not give it up because it is easier to do something else, and your people prefer something that will demand less attention. Try the method in the prayer meeting, as a preparation for the pulpit. Such work would rescue the mid-week meeting from aimless monotony. The method persisted in will make you an instructive, Biblical preacher, and build up a thoughtful, spiritual church. It must be remembered that the microscopic study may always be a danger to the prophetic vision. But no preacher need be a mere expositor. Imagination and feeling must give light and heat to learning. "The preaching which is strong in its appeal to authority, wide in its grasp of truth, convincing in its appeal to reason, and earnest in

[1] "House of Seven Gables," Preface, p. 4.

its address to conscience and the heart, all of these at once, that preaching which comes nearest to the type of the apostolic epistles, is the most complete and so the most powerful approach of truth to the whole man, and so is the kind of preaching which, with due freedom granted to our idiosyncrasies, it is best for us all to seek and educate." [1]

[1] Phillips Brooks, "Lectures on Preaching," p. 132.

XV

DOCTRINAL PREACHING

OUTLINE

Reasons for the Decline of Doctrinal Preaching.
- Reaction from extreme doctrinal preaching.
- The unfavorable atmosphere of modern life.
- Question as to the value of doctrinal preaching.
- The questions of duty foremost.
- The growth of Christian agnosticism.
- The difficulty of formulating and teaching doctrine.
- The limited sphere of doctrine.

The need of Doctrinal Preaching.
- A wrong method and spirit of doctrinal preaching.
- Doctrine essential to Christian life.
- The great truths unchangeable in importance and attraction.

How should Doctrine be preached?
- Scriptural, not merely confessional.
- The Expositor the best teacher of doctrine.
- Doctrine in the light of its purpose.
- Not chiefly through logic.
- The great preachers have dwelt upon doctrine.

Apologetic Sermons.
- The wrong and right use of apologetics.
- The Bible examples of true apologetics.
- The urgent need to-day.
- The sincere questioning spirit.

How shall the Apologist in the pulpit do his work?
- By the understanding of the times.
- Elements of the new environment of faith.
- Apologetics to be preached only as needed.
- They must show the reasonableness of faith.
- They should be occasional, not systematic.

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XV

DOCTRINAL PREACHING

The present tendency of many pulpits to ignore doctrine, to put life over against doctrine, is a reaction from the extreme doctrinal preaching of the former generation, when sermons like those of Timothy Dwight and Nathaniel Emmons formed a veritable "body of divinity." Moreover, our age is not a favorable atmosphere for doctrinal preaching. The intensity of industrial and social life has weakened contemplation and fostered the sensational spirit. Men ask for brightness, and comfort, and inspiration from the pulpit, and not for the exact and hard thinking of doctrine. There is also a question whether the high doctrinal preaching of former days had its proper effect upon present life, whether the emphasis upon other worldliness did not lead to a disregard of the practical problems of this world, and to a partial and nerveless morality. The central thought of Christ is life, and this must

be interpreted not in terms of the future merely, but of the present, a righteous life, personal and social. Has there not been the long teaching of dogma, man's speculations about truth, and the neglect of the plain ethics of Christ? No doubt the popular plea of life without dogma is often the excuse of unbelief, but it has within it an earnest seeking for life.

Questions of duty are those that press for answer. For we have come into a new world of work and relation, that demands constant readjustment of life, and restatement of principle. The ethical idea is a progressive one. The old individualism will not answer. We live in an age of growing social consciousness. What are we to do with houses and wages? What is to be the relation of men in work and society? What has Christianity to do with the real life of the world? The social problem naturally turns the thought of men from dogma, intellectual conceptions of truth, to the practical issues that press so heavily upon all.

Then we live in a new earth and under a new heaven. The days of our grandfathers seem nearer to the first century than to the twentieth. The marvels of the new science, the transformations of the new inventions, suggest the partial nature of our former knowledge. If there have been such unfoldings of the natural world, may

there not also be of the spiritual? Can the infinite mystery of Godliness be put so surely and confidently into the postulates of human reason? Can we map out the Godward side of truth as clearly as we do our garden walks? With the agnosticism that denies the possibility of revelation, is the Christian agnosticism that comes from the humility that "we know in part." It is not willing to speak of some things that seemed certain to the fathers.

The increased difficulty of formulating and teaching doctrine enters into the problem. The Biblical materials of doctrine have changed. No thoughtful man would think of stating Biblical doctrine to-day by the use of Cruden's Concordance. The progressive nature of revelation must be considered and each statement treated in the light of the author and the age. Has the preacher sufficient grasp of the materials of doctrine?

Philosophy has had no little to do with the conception and form of doctrine. Have we a clear and consistent philosophy wherewith to express the materials of Bible knowledge and Christian experience? Shall we express truth in the form of law or of life? Shall we bring the Hebrew modes of thought into the scientific temper of to-day? Or shall we dress truth in present modes?

The doctrine of God — shall the emphasis be upon the transcendence of God and His unlikeness to man, or upon His immanence and the kinship of God and man? Or take the doctrine of the Atonement — Shall the truth bear the form of human sacrifices, or express the law of the inner life? In such questions is seen the difficulty of doctrinal preaching. And in the face of the difficulty many earnest minds have been uncertain.

And finally, the growing spiritual life of the Church has limited the sphere of doctrinal teaching. Christ's last prayer is being slowly realized in the growing unity of His disciples. The things that differ, born of the polemic spirit, that found their place in many of the creeds, are giving way to the things that make for peace, born of the spirit of love. There is a false tolerance of moral indifference, that includes everything of a religious name, that does not discriminate between truth and error, but the true tolerance that "consists in the love of truth and the love of man, harmonized in the love of God" will dwell upon those simple and central truths of the Gospel that bind men in the fellowship of a common love and service.

It must be frankly admitted that present tendencies are against doctrinal preaching. As

far as these tendencies are for a practical religion, we must feel that they are wholesome. But so far as practical religion is separated from true belief and devotional practice, so far the tendency is unwholesome. The lower streams cannot be kept full save by unbroken connection with the upper springs.

The loss of doctrinal preaching has been attributed to the loss of spiritual life. "There is widespread spiritual desolation and widespread indifference to dogma," and the conclusion is dogmatically drawn that they are cause and effect. The life of our age is too complex, the spirit of worldliness is too subtle, to admit of this easy logic. The dislike of doctrinal preaching is often due to the wrong method and spirit, and not from indifference to the great truths thus expressed. "Men who are looking for a law of life and an inspiration of life are met by a theory of life." Christ gives life. To make Christ living and life-giving is the work of the preacher. "All that has come to me about Him from His word, all that has grown clear to me about His nature, or His methods, by my inward or outward experience, all that He has told me about Himself, becomes part of the message that I must tell to those men whom He has sent me to call home to Himself. I will do this in its fulness. And this is the preaching

of doctrine, positive, distinct, characteristic Christian truth." [1]

The preaching of doctrine, then, is essential. Truth is the source of life. And doctrine is the effort to reach clear thought as to the person and word and work of Christ. The loss of clear, positive convictions as to Christ must in the end be the wreck of morals.

Doctrine has to do with the strength of the Christian life. It is inseparable from firm conviction and pure emotion and masterful will. Strong convictions come from clear views. Clear views mean that the facts and truths of Scripture have distinct form, and this is doctrine. Pure emotions are born of clear perceptions. This means truths in their proportion and relation, and this is only another name for doctrine. The will acts upon convictions and is moved by feeling. So the whole religious life depends upon Christian doctrine, properly understood.

The Gospel, then, and the human mind both demand the teaching of Christian doctrine. It is a misreading of life to interpret the popular dislike of dogma as indifference to the great truths of God and the soul of man. No questions are so perennial as those of religion. No person is so thoroughly alive, present in the life

[1] Brooks, "Yale Lectures," p. 128.

of the world, as the person of Jesus Christ. "These high themes have not lost their charm. They are vitally related to our well-being. Man has great concern in every one of them. God, Christ, the Holy Spirit, character, duty, responsibility, the soul, immortality, destiny, are themes that are more closely related to our personal interests than taxes, wages, or tariff. These are the chief sources of our comfort. They supply our strongest incentives to righteousness. Here are the bonds of our social fabric, the roots of our civilization. From them alone comes the hope of a redeemed earth, and a new era for the race."

And what shall mark our preaching of doctrine? It should be scriptural, not merely confessional, and always interpreted in the Spirit of Christ. The facts abide. Truth is unchanged and unchanging, but the doctrine, the form of stating the truth, must change. It is so in the natural world, and it must be so in the spiritual world. The expositor will be the best teacher of doctrine. It will be Biblical more than dogmatic theology. Dr. Dale preached a theology coming from his study of John, and then these conceptions he tried to interpret through the Pauline forms. If doctrine is approached through Scripture interpretation rather than philosophic study, its teaching will have variety

and adaptation and freedom from dogmatism. Truth is shown on its many sides, to fit different natures and conditions. The New Testament writers do not seem to teach any single, consistent theory of the Atonement, but each man looks at the wondrous mystery from his own nature and training and necessities. In the Scriptures it is always doctrine through life, through personal experience. And so the truth is presented in its practical aspects.

The true teacher of doctrine must understand the development of doctrine, the forces and steps through which truth has come to its present creedal form, or there will be misstatement or wrong emphasis upon the teaching of the Gospel.

Men must distinguish between the wrappings of truth, that match the environment of the age, and the essential truth itself. The statement of God's sovereignty in the Westminster Confession was the voice of a monarchical age, before the rise of the democratic spirit and the worth of the common man, and the voice of an age lacking in humanity, when a hundred crimes were punishable with death. It is no disparagement to that noble confession to say that it was impossible for such an age properly to express the Fatherhood of God. Every doctrine should be viewed and discussed in the light of its purpose, living truth, not mere speculation.

A doctrine that cannot feed the soul and give more life is quite sure to be something other than the Word of Christ.

Doctrine should be taught with large charity for those whose speculative beliefs prevent them from assent to our position; but with firm and steady insistence upon duty and the supremacy of conscience. The doctrinal preacher is in great danger from rationalism and dogmatism. Christianity is reasonable, and must make its constant appeal to reason, but obedience, not reason, is the organ of spiritual knowledge. Correct belief is not an unimportant matter. But the primary question is ethical and not theological, the attitude of the inner life towards the ideal presented by Christ. If the inmost desire turns towards Him, it is the path of moral ascent; and away from Him is the path of moral decline. Logic is not to take the highest place in doctrinal preaching. The truth must not contradict reason, but it must appeal to experience, and be clothed in the rhetorical form, warm and pulsating with feeling and imagination. The preacher who deals endlessly in logic feeds only a few natures, and cultivates only one faculty, and is rarely able to apprehend the fullest truth. For the Gospel truth is the complement to the entire nature of man.

There should be the systematic teaching of doctrine, so that from the inductive use of the Scriptures the people will know the great doctrines of Christianity. And it is wise to use present interest in any truth, *e.g.* the Atonement, for full instruction. "The preachers that have always held and moved men have always preached doctrine. No exhortation to a good life that does not put behind it some truth as deep as eternity can seize and hold the conscience. Preach doctrine, preach all the doctrine that you know, and learn forever more and more. But preach it always not that men may believe it, but that men may be saved by believing it. So it shall be alive and not dead. So men shall rejoice in it, not deny it; so they shall feed on it at your hands, as on the bread of life, solid and sweet, and claiming for itself the appetite of man which God made for it." [1]

Apologetic Sermons. — There are those who say that Apologetics have no place in the pulpit. Christianity is aggressive. Never put yourself on the defensive. All doubt is sin. The only cure is the Gospel. Preach that fearlessly whether men hear or forbear. If men feel in this way they can never have the true apologetic element in their sermons. But the feeling is based on a wrong conception of apologetics and

[1] Brooks, "Yale Lectures," p. 129.

a wrong attitude towards men. If we take apologetics in its technical sense, as "the scientific representation of the grounds on which Christian theology in so far as it is a part of human knowledge rests and may be vindicated," we may deny it a place in the pulpit. Or if we take it in the loose popular sense, as an apology, meaning an excuse, something for which we are ashamed, it certainly has no place in the pulpit. Neither of these ideas is in the Greek word "Apologia," and its use by early Christian teachers. It means a defence of truth, upon whatever grounds that defence may be based. Who of us will say that the truth of the Gospel shall never be defended in the pulpit?

We have many examples of apologetics in the Bible. Using the word in its proper sense, some of the most striking parts of the Bible are apologies. The book of Job is such. It deals with one of the primal questions that lies at the basis of religion. In view of human suffering, is God good? And the value of the book of Job is that it treats the elemental truths of religion with perfect fairness; it does not hide any fact. It does not try to make facts harmonize with theory, but first of all, asks, what is true? Such a book has great value to-day for the pulpit, for men are asking the first ques-

tions all about us with passionate earnestness. And such a book has the value of being "timeless and passionless," the facts and motives and truths laid bare, stripped of the feeling and prejudice of present persons and parties. Christ sometimes acts the part of an apologist. It is true that He speaks with authority. "I say unto you." There is a positive tone. He stands as the master of truth and life. And yet in view of the dulness of men, and their slowness of heart, He is willing to reason, remove the errors, defend His course and views. His teaching of the value of life, the humblest and the most sinful, is brought out as a defence against the criticism of Pharisaic exclusiveness. The word Apologist has been truthfully applied to the Apostle Paul. Standing on the castle stairs at Jerusalem, he says, "Brethren and fathers, hear ye my defence, which I now make unto you." (Acts xxii. 1.) Twice in writing to the Philippians he puts himself in the same attitude. He tells them that in his bonds and in his defence and confirmation of the Gospel they are partakers of his grace. (Phil. i. 7.) And "I am set for the defence of the Gospel." (vs. 17). The whole Epistle to the Hebrews is in this sense an Apology, trying to remove difficulties and misconceptions from the minds of the Jews, and revealing

Jesus as the hope of Israel, the "Gospel for a time of transition," as Bishop Westcott so finely interprets it.

Not only have we good Scripture warrant for apologetics, but there is urgent need for their wise use. We cannot be true to all our hearers without using this element. The majority of the congregation may have few difficulties; but there is little provincialism and isolation to-day, and there is more religious unrest than we may think from the surface. There are thoughtful unbelievers, and young men and women in the critical state of transition from a traditional to a personal faith. The minister who does not think of these minds, and sympathize with them, and try to lead them into a reasonable faith, will lose his hold upon the life of the community. Many a church is leading a feeble life, giving a flickering light, because of the constrained and mechanical way that the truth is spoken. We may preach strongly upon justification by faith, and give the Scripture teachings of the Atonement, and this teaching will help those prepared for it; but to others it will only be words thrown into the wind, to men who are still stumbling over the alphabet of religion. Shall we have no word for these troubled and anxious minds?

How shall we perform this duty of Apologist

in the pulpit? It may be answered, first of all, we must have an understanding of the times. New elements have come into the problem, and these we must understand, or we shall be setting up men of straw. A true apologetic is to adjust faith to its intellectual and social environment, to help men hold faith in new realms of truth, to hold fast to that which cannot be shaken. Think of the new environment into which the Church has come; and in which we must so present Christ that He will be the power and wisdom of God.

1. A new way of looking at the universe through Evolution.

2. A new way of looking at the Bible, through the science of Biblical criticism.

3. A new view of the religious history of mankind, through the modern science of comparative religion.

We should preach apologetics only as we are sure of the need. Single cases may often best be met in private conversation and by suggestions as to reading. It might be a mistake to disturb the minds of an audience with difficulties that have never come to them, for the sake of meeting the need of two or three persons whom we can reach in a far more personal way than from the pulpit. We cannot decide this matter from our own reading and intellec-

tual interest, but from the careful study of the parish. When we feel the necessity of apologetics in the pulpit, two things should govern our method. They should not be preached in a dry and mechanical way, but with a sympathetic spirit, showing the reasonableness of faith. Then they should be occasional, rather than systematic. Let no man take a careless or contemptuous attitude towards doubters or those whom he thinks to be unsound. There are two kinds of doubters: those whose life is low, and those who are exceptionally truthful and earnest. The Arthur Hallam type is not uncommon in this critical age. It is a gross mistake to class all unbelievers alike; more than this, it is an unpardonable sin. Some of the finest souls in the community may have serious intellectual difficulties. They doubt because they are sensitive, morbidly so perhaps, because they wish to know all sides of truth; because they would not make their judgment blind. Such lives are worth winning. Once convinced of truth, they are loyal to it, and become the strength of the Church. God pity us, if by our harsh treatment we make it impossible for any of these little ones to believe. Let us get the Spirit of Christ in His dealing with Thomas. When the minds of the people are aroused by new discussion of Biblical subjects, if we touch the

questions at all in the pulpit, we should do so accurately, without exaggeration, without special pleading, and with the spirit of fairness and charity. Never make the awful mistake of resting faith on any false or artificial condition. If you do so, you will make more atheists than converts. We must not be afraid of the fullest examination and freest discussion. Oh, for a little of Milton's faith, "Who ever knew truth put to the worse in a free and open encounter?"

Take the matter of Biblical criticism. Will it be any help to faith for a minister to say, "The Devil was the first higher critic"? "Revelation will stand after criticism has done its utmost; and to propagate this conviction and to deliver the Church from unreasoning panic is one of the urgent tasks of the present day apologetic." — BRUCE, "Apologetics."

While we must make this allowance to apologetics, their use in the pulpit is to be occasional, and not systematic. It is a mistake to make the impression that truth is always on the defensive. The stock story of Bishop Bloomfield of London illustrates the danger of the tendency. "After all, my lord, I do believe there be a God." said a verger; "I have heard you faithfully for five and twenty years, and yet I am a believer still!"

The general tone of the pulpit should be

positive. And the preaching of the truth will be often the best answer to error. The entrance of the light will drive out the darkness. Canon Liddon of St. Paul's was a noble apologist, as setting forth the positive truth, as the antidote to the current error. Take the false theories in the air that undermine the sense of responsibility, and train the soul to ignore and then deny God. They underlie the social and political movements of thought. How shall we meet these theories? The best way is to teach most positively the moral and religious truths that are imperilled. We are to present the living realities of the Gospel; the evidence of personal experience; the power of an aggressive Christianity. One of the best series of apologetic sermons was a course on modern missions, by Dr. Tucker, now President of Dartmouth College. The Life of Faith, the Conquest of the Gospel, are most convincing apologetics. The true apologetic must be permeated with the evangelistic spirit, and the ultimate object to make men conscious of sin, and lead them to repentance and faith.

XVI

ETHICAL SERMONS

OUTLINE

The relation of the Gospel and Ethics.
- The New Testament emphasis on the ethical life.
- The evil of the separation of the Gospel and ethics in pulpit teaching.
- The age demands the revival of ethical preaching.

What shall be the preaching of Ethics?
- Frequent and systematic.
- Christian ethics.
- Biographical sermons often the best way; truth in life.

The Ethics of Christ must be interpreted in the light of present conditions.
- There must be (1) a growing ethical ideal; (2) a growing ethical passion.

Suggested Methods of Ethical Teaching.
- Midweek topics.
- Studies and discussions in men's clubs.
- Pulpit teaching.

The Spirit of Ethical Teaching.
- Free from partisanship.
- Accurate and temperate speech.
- Spiritual values exalted.
- The education of the conscience.
- The effort to increase good will among men.
- The conviction that God's will can be found and obeyed.

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XVI

ETHICAL SERMONS

The Gospel is a redemption, and not an ethic. Its power is in the new creation and the divine impulse. When the spiritual side of the message is lost, and the pulpit becomes a chair of moral philosophy, it has lost its peculiar power.

Such was the eighteenth century pulpit in England. There was a lifeless formalism in religion and little more than a cold Deism in the pulpit. Blackstone, the great law commentator, went from pulpit to pulpit in London and heard no more Gospel than he could find in the essays of Cicero. The moral life of the nation was weakened with the loss of a redemptive Gospel. Even Chesterfield could feel its moral weakness. "We are no longer a nation," he exclaims. And it was the preaching of the Gospel of Redemption under the Wesleys, the grace of God able to save from the uttermost to the uttermost, that purified the religious life of the nation and awakened the moral sense.

The purpose of redemption is a right life, a

godly and righteous life, right with God and right with men, a life of spiritual graces, fitting the children of God, a life of the practical fruits of righteousness, making the earth an Eden. And a right life is the rational outcome of a redeemed life. The Gospel is profitable for the life that now is. Salvation cannot find its content in a saved soul, nor in a heaven above. A man alone is no man. The Christian life is wrought out through all the relations and duties of human society. Christ's gift of eternal life is not a matter of time and place, but the qualities of character that are deathless as the will of God. We are to-day in our Father's house. Now we are to lead the life of sons. The place where we stand has as much of God as the farthest point of light. The motives of the Gospel are misread and misused that fail to sweeten and purify the issues of life. The New Testament places emphasis upon the ethical life. Christ's secret of a happy life is a right life. His portrait of a true man fills out the best human ideal with the heavenly light. The beatitudes are the enduring qualities of earthly blessedness. His abundant life is to be the "salt of the earth," both inspiring and preserving the virtues of man and society; the "light of the world," making clear and giving life to the truths and duties of man.

The apostolic word dwells with plain and homely iteration upon the present duties of life; the duties of husbands and wives, parents and children, masters and servants, friends and neighbors and citizens. Every typical sphere of life is touched, and principles laid down which are the germs of all social duty and progress. There is no excuse and little tolerance for the visionary and unreal. The Gospel is to be the dynamic of life, or it is no Gospel. It follows life to the least fraction of a gift and to the detail of the commonest duty. All doctrine is for life. Every Epistle has its practical conclusion. Every heaven-born truth has its lowly home on the earth.

It has been rightly said that there is as much ethics in the New Testament as theology. They are never separated, never treated as distinct. Religion is to be practical, and ethics to be spiritual. The mind of Christ was to go about doing good. The union of doctrine and life, of theology and ethics, has not always been seen in the work of the pulpit or the life of the Church. The high doctrines of grace have sometimes been proclaimed by the pulpit, over against morality, as though they were contradictions, and the moral law and the Sermon on the Mount treated as though lacking in spirituality.

On the other hand the redemptive truths have

been minimized, and the whole duty and privilege of man found in the Sermon on the Mount, as though Christ had never offered the prayer in the seventeenth chapter of John, or promised the guidance of the Spirit into further truth. In the early Church there were those idly gazing up into heaven, neglectful of the duty at their feet; and those so intent on ministry, that, Martha-like, they forgot to choose the good part of feeding the soul. In every age, men have said, with Peter and John on the Mount of Transfiguration, "Let us build three Tabernacles." And the men in the valley, apart from their Master, have been helpless and faithless in the presence of human need, and cried, "Why could not we cast it out?"

The present age demands a revival of moral preaching. There has been a wide loosening of the old bonds of restraint and attachment. Coming face to face with the conceptions of many peoples, there has been the wavering of the old standards of conduct. Unexampled opportunities of gain and pleasure have swept men away from the simple self-denying morality of the Gospel into indifference and self-indulgence. The marriage bond is less sacred. Business is governed by a merciless competition. Politics is regarded as the game of parties, and

not the sphere for the noblest service to society. The personal morality of the Church differs not so much from the morality of the world. And the Christian law is not the governing factor in business and the State. Christian men have not hesitated to corner the market, and press the weak to the wall by combination, and grasp public facilities in the interest of private gain, and govern national policies by the commercial greed of a class. Is not a fearless voice needed to search the conscience, apply the ethics of the Gospel, and call the age to a higher standard of values and of conduct?

And what shall the preaching of ethics be? It is certain that it must be frequent and systematic, not occasional and incidental. We cannot take it for granted that faith will be expressed in appropriate works. Faith is a germ that must grow by exercise and be disciplined into strength and beauty. Men must be taught Christian duties, and that the most correct belief and the most fervent feeling will not avail, without a life that tries to do the will of Christ. "Not every one that saith unto me Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father that is in heaven."

It must be Christian ethics that are preached. And to be Christian ethics they must not only

have the standard of the life that Christ gives, but ever connected in their motive and power with the Spirit of Christ. Every truth must be related to life, its natural and necessary conduct clearly drawn, and earnestly enforced. And then the common duties that belong to the relations of men in practical life must be taught with line upon line, and precept upon precept, with personal and effective illustration and appeal to the higher elements of life. Dr. T. T. Munger's sermons, "On the Threshold," thus teach young men and young women the Christian conception of character. Dr. McAfee's "The Old Law for the New World" shows the perennial power and fitness of the moral law to the life of men. And Dr. Wright's exposition of the Sermon on the Mount, "The Ideals of the Mount for the Life of Men on the Plain," shows that Christ holds up no impossible ideals, but the natural and necessary traits of a new man and a redeemed society. These are examples of sermons on personal and social morality spoken with the measure and accent of the Gospel.

Biography makes the best interpretation of life, and gives the best lessons of life. "We shall teach more and more by biography," said Mrs. Humphrey Ward one day to the late Professor Jowett of Oxford; "first by the life of Jesus, the noblest of all biography, and then by the

lives of other good men, sages, and heroes, and prophets." And the biographical sermon is often the best way of teaching Christian ethics. The world had not known sin save by Christ's holy life, and vicarious death, that condemned sin in the flesh. And men come to true self-knowledge, to the judgment upon evil and approval of good, through the portrayal of life. The subtle and complex nature of temptation, the growth of moral forces and tendencies, are traced in the revelation of a life. And Bible characters hold this mirror up to nature, not only from their truthfulness to nature, but because they are so removed from the present as to be "timeless and passionless," teaching truth free from the mists of present motives and controversies.

No man who reads Robertson's etchlike portrait of Balaam can ever forget the perversion of noble gifts by avarice, and the startling glimpse of a heart that "would not play false, and yet would wrongly win." "There are men who would not lie, and yet who would bribe a poor man to support a cause which he believes in his soul to be false. There are men who would resent at the sword's point the charge of dishonor, who would yet, for selfish gratification, entice the weak into sin, and damn body and soul in hell. There are men who would be

shocked at being called traitors, who in time of war will yet make a fortune by selling arms to their country's foes. There are men, respectable and respected, who give liberally and support religious societies, and go to church, and would not take God's name in vain, who have made wealth in some trade of opium or spirits, out of the wreck of innumerable human lives. Balaam is one of the accursed spirits now, but he did no more than these are doing." [1] And Bishop Phillips Brooks, in that most realistic picture of King Saul, the wreck of a noble life by the spirit of selfishness and wilfulness, gives us the principle of all truly ethical preaching, in keeping life in the presence of God, in bringing every motive and step to the bar of the divine will. The standard of life and the very conception of God depends upon the willingness to do the will of God. "Through the great open world moves God, like a strong wind or spirit, finding out all the public and the secret places of the life of man. In the breath of that Spirit we are all journeying; no one can escape for a moment. But while your brother at your side is full of the sense of God's love, to you God seems the hindrance of your life; His righteousness defeats your plans, His purity rebukes your lust, His nature and being smite you in the face, like a

[1] "Sermons," p. 661.

blast that blows bitter and cold, from a far-off judgment day. Does God hate you and love your brother? No, He loves you both, but you with your disobedience are setting yourself against His love. You must turn around. You must be converted. And then, when your will is by obedience confederate with the will of God, every breath of His presence shall be your joy and salvation." [1]

It must be said further that ethical preaching, to be a living message of God, must interpret the ethics of Christ in the light of present conditions. There must be: (1) a growing ethical ideal; and (2) a growing ethical passion.

First, a growing ethical ideal. It is not enough to maintain an institutional Christianity. Christianity must become incorporated in the life of each age. It is not enough to teach certain rules of personal conduct; the principles of life must be unfolded to apply to new conditions, finding their emphasis in the life of the age. In an age of individualism, when the chief thought was individual right and duty and liberty, the emphasis was on the truths of individual character, of personal morality. The ethical man according to Christianity was the man of purity, integrity, sincerity, and kindness. In a social age like ours, with a growing sense of

[1] "Sermons," Vol. IV, p. 313.

humanity, the subtle and vital relation of one life to another, the solidarity of human life, the ethical conception is not satisfied with personal moralities, but with the right relation of men in industry, society, and the State. Temperance is one thing to our fathers, and another thing to us, with the scientific knowledge of the effects of alcohol, and the moral strain of our complex and strenuous life. Justice is one thing between free industrial equals; it may be another thing towards masses of men bound and banded together by common necessities and hopes. Our law often fails to express the new social and industrial relation of men. The right to work in one's own house seems a sacred right, and it has been decreed a right by the highest courts of the State. And yet to such decree "is directly due the continuance and growth of tenement manufacture, and of the sweating system in the United States and its present prevalence in New York, with its terrible consequences of overcrowding, child labor in the homes, and the diseases of congested and pinched populations."

Well says the author of "Moral Overstrain," concerning the failure of the law to recognize the new social relations of men: "The law embodies an outworn philosophy, the old *laissez-faire* theory of extreme individualism. — If the

servant was dissatisfied with the conditions of his employment; if the dangers created, not merely by the necessities of the work, but by the master's indifference to the safety of his men, were in the eyes of the latter too great to be endured with prudence, then, being under this theory of a 'free agent' to go or stay, if he chose to stay, he must take the possible consequences of personal injury or death. This freedom is to him, not liberty, but injustice." [1] He is free to accept unjust conditions or starve. The conscience of man must be awakened and trained to a finer sense of its social relations and to the obligation that comes from it. The conscience must be taught and trained to meet the new issues of life, until conscience shall be the king of the entire sphere of modern life.

It is evident that conscience has not kept pace with the development of industry and society. The Rev. Dr. Charles D. Williams, the Episcopal Bishop of Michigan, in an address on the "Final Test of Christianity," describes the too common examples of "commercial and political iniquity and civic unrighteousness," and then answers the question, Who are the men who do these things? "They are often gentlemen who are scrupulously correct in their personal behavior. As to the minor morals, they are temperate,

[1] Alger, "Moral Overstrain," p. 173.

sober, and chaste. They are good husbands, kind fathers; their home life is above reproach. They are often kind and considerate neighbors. They pay their debts, and fulfil their personal obligations to their friends. They scorn a lie where no business interest is at stake. They are interested actively in all civic improvements of a material sort. They give munificently to all movements for human betterment that do not interfere with their commercial schemes. They found hospitals, schools, and social settlements; they build libraries and universities. They are even orthodox, pious, and devoted in their religious life. They go to church regularly, teach in the Sunday-school, lead in prayer meeting, support the pastor (so long as he preaches smooth things), and give generously to missions. Now, why is this so? What is the secret of this strange ethical inconsistency, this moral contradiction? It seems to me to lie in a lack of moral coördination, a divided and disintegrated conscience. These men have attained and fulfilled their ideals of morality in their personal conduct and relationship, and their technically religious life. In these regions they exercise and exhaust their conscience. But in their commercial relations and business life they have no standards whatever. Here they are morally color-blind. They see no distinc-

tions of right and wrong. They are for the most part utterly unconscious of the flagrant iniquity of their doings. For here in this region of commercial life the writs of Christ do not run. Even common conscience and the moral law have no jurisdiction. 'The accepted rules of the game' are a sufficient code of ethics. There is a hopeless cleavage, a bridgeless gulf, through the midst of their lives. They have fulfilled all the reasonable requirements of righteousness here in their personal conduct and religious piety. They are therefore free to do as they like in this other and outer region of their existence. They need to pray the prayer of the Psalmist, 'Unite my heart to fear Thy name.'" [1]

It is true that Christian men have never met such temptations to worldliness as in this western hemisphere.

> "The homely nurse doth all she can,
> To make her foster-child, her inmate man,
> Forget the glories he hath known,
> And that imperial palace, whence he came."

Never were there such opportunities for personal gain and power. Never have the horizons and relations of men shifted and widened so rapidly. And if Christian men often stand with this "disintegrated conscience," making Christ the

[1] *McClure's Magazine*, December, 1905.

"Lord of the hills but not of the valleys," is it not because the pulpit has somewhat lacked the prophet's vision and the prophet's voice? The prophets were interpreters of their age. They were educators of the personal and social conscience. And the pulpit has this perpetual function, this divine privilege and duty, to interpret the growing life of man and make Christ its master.

Is it true (the claims of an earnest preacher) that "applied Christianity has been our theme"? Is it true that "never before have so many sermons been preached on the ethical truths of Christianity, and never before has life been so unchristian"? Would it not be truer to say, that the pulpit as a whole has not caught the social message, and has failed to make the "new occasions teach new duties"? The ideal and the power to reach it are inseparable. A truer ethical ideal would give birth to a new ethical passion. That such a singleness of purpose is needed in the Church, born of a nobler conception of social relations, is the conviction of the most earnest students of religious life. Wherever men have caught the vision their hearts have been stirred. It has made religion a practical reality, and faith a transforming and impelling power. From the narrowness of ecclesiastical divisions and the stifling air of its

contests, men have caught glimpses of the splendor of the Kingdom and their hearts have beat fast in the freer air of its promise. Even beyond the Church, thousands of men have breathed the life-giving spirit. A hundred years ago, the choicest of our youth gave themselves with a heart of fire to the evangelization of great heathen peoples. And the only enthusiasm to-day comparable with that of these early pioneers of foreign missions, is the passion to minister with which hundreds of the choicest young men and women lose themselves in the sin and want and misery of great so-called Christian cities. The highest mark and hope of our day is the nobler manhood slowly coming from the social conscience. There is a truer civic conscience, when men like the late Col. Waring will forget business and social preferment and devote their energies to the cleaning of a great city, making it a fit place to bring up the children in, in some faint sense a city of God. There is a finer Christian pity, when women like Miss Jane Addams do not consider culture, and wealth, and social position matters to be grasped after for themselves, but give their lives, in true Messianic entrance into the heart of sodden and hopeless masses of pinched and degraded poverty.

Wealth is for use, culture is for ministry,

strength is to lift up the weak. A score of educated youth to-day are trying to fulfil the law of Christ by bearing the burdens of others, where one thought of these social duties a generation ago. It is the moral passion born of a fuller moral ideal. Such ethical preaching would have vital relation to the spiritual progress of the Kingdom. "Evangelism," says Dr. Rauschenbusch, "is only the cutting edge of the Church, and it is driven by the weight back of it. The evangelizing power of the Church depends on its moral prestige and spiritual authority. To be effective, evangelism must hold up a moral standard so high above the actual lives of men that it will smite them with conviction of sin." [1]

A true Christian righteousness would give the Church its needed moral prestige and the pulpit its spiritual authority. When men see that the Gospel tends to right existing wrongs, to command the public conscience, to lay the industrial world under the law of love to one's neighbor, to fit men for earth as well as for heaven, the time of our salvation, indeed, draweth nigh. And a new moral passion born of this larger moral conception would bridge gulfs between classes that now seem impassable, bring men now indifferent to the Church, or alienated from it, under the power of a personal love, and open

[1] "The New Evangelism."

a thousand doors for the entrance of Christ into modern life. Faith spreads by the loving touch of a vitalized person. To the ethical ideal through the social consciousness are we to look for the moral enthusiasm, the singleness of devotion, that shall bring a new era of spiritual life to the Church, and so of wider conquest for the Kingdom of Christ.

"The pulpit for to-day must be competent to give instruction in the moral laws which govern social and industrial life — the organized life of humanity. The age requires this instruction; the people desire it; the ministers should give it. If the minister will go to his Book for this purpose, he will find it quite as rich in sociological as in theological instruction; quite as fertile in its suggestions respecting the duty of man to man, as in its suggestions respecting the nature and government of God." [1]

Some Suggested Methods of Ethical Teaching. — Some practical topic of social ethics might well be discussed at stated intervals in the mid-week meeting. Questions of the family, education, amusements, temperance, labor, civic reform, the immigrant, the State, should be carefully considered in the light of the Gospel, and have the earnest thought and prayer of Christian men.

[1] Lyman Abbott, "The Christian Ministry," p. 164.

The growth of men's clubs in the churches offers a special opportunity for ethical study and teaching. They must have a stronger reason for being than the increase of an evening service or the support of a local cause. There must be a growing conception of the Kingdom of God, or enthusiasm will be short-lived. Under good leadership men will eagerly follow such studies as Peabody's "Jesus Christ and the Social Problem," Brooks' "Social Unrest," and Gladden's "Tools and the Man." Occasional addresses can be secured from special workers and teachers. And such teaching will be felt at last in a stronger and more ethical faith. The preacher is to interpret the divine meaning of life, to make men conscious that God is on the field, when to the common eye He is most invisible. And to reveal the spiritual significance of ethical and social movements that aim at human betterment, however crude and imperfect the efforts, is to strengthen faith in the ever present Spirit of God, and to train men in the open vision and large sympathies that make them co-workers with the divine plan.

The ethical teaching of the pulpit may be largely by exposition. The great principles of the Moral Law and the Sermon on the Mount should be unfolded with all their present relations and sanctions. The practical precepts

of the Epistles will show the height and depth of the Gospel law, a prophetic book like Amos will lay bare the social lies of men and the living and eternal truths of justice and mercy; and the preacher who lives in his age and understands the meaning of its forces will always be a teacher of ethics, and by frequent use of illustration and application will give the social emphasis to his message.

The Spirit of Ethical Teaching. — The truth should be spoken in love, with supreme regard for man, not for theory. Men are often in the stress of circumstances; they seem a part of a great system; they cannot do as they like. No man is guiltless. We are all involved in the sin of society; the blood of human lives is upon many things we eat and wear. So it becomes the preacher of ethics to look well to himself and consider the spirit of his teaching.

The questions of ethics should never be approached in the partisan spirit. Men, equally sincere, may differ radically about the application of truth, the method of reform; and if the preacher cannot rise above the din and dust of parties, he had better be silent. His work is that of a prophet, to reveal and insist upon a higher righteousness.

The preacher of ethics is to keep the calmness of mind that sees truly, and the self-control

that can condemn evil without railing at every evil-doer; the sympathy that puts himself in the place of the other man, and the faith that believes in the power of the simple statement of truth. Exaggeration is a weakness of the American pulpit. It is often the excess of earnestness that overreaches the mark, the sign of an ill-balanced nature, an intemperate zeal that alienates the very lives it ought to win, and inflames antagonism it ought to allay. Accurate and temperate speech, always the condition of spiritual leadership, is especially needful for the teaching of Christian ethics.

The preacher is ever to exalt spiritual values above the material, in public teaching, daily speech, and social relation to recognize spiritual worth and honor it, free from the artificial distinctions of work and position. The spiritual motives that bind all men to God and to each other are to be his concern. He may be a socialist, — as an individual he has a right to hold any theory of economic and political advance. Whenever such methods are attempts to embody the ethics of the Gospel, he has a right to proclaim them. But as a priest and prophet of religion, he misuses his great trust if he preaches an economic method in the place of spiritual righteousness.

For the preacher does the most by keeping

conscience sensitive. All personal and social advance waits upon moral and spiritual forces. "To raise up men who have the fear of God before them," to use the famous saying of Oliver Cromwell, is to insure the victory of righteousness. The best the pulpit can do is to shape public opinion and inspire men to apply their religious faith to daily life.

It is also the mission of the pulpit to increase the spirit of good will among men. Here lies the hope of peaceful progress. Men cannot understand others because they look solely at their personal or class interest. To teach Christ's view of man and His passion for the lowest and the weakest is to promote the spirit of brotherly love and increase the realm of personal rectitude and social justice.

As the ethical teacher, the pulpit must insist upon the spiritual meaning and obligation of all life and relation and work. Generous giving cannot atone for unjust accumulation. The whole process of life is ethical; nothing can be excepted, nothing can escape. We must insist that all life is to be religious, and in all things God's will can be found and obeyed. "It would be in the line of a genuine apostolic succession if some of you should come to be enrolled with the pioneers in this work of furnishing moral leadership for the social struggle which is to have

so large a place in the life to which you will be called to minister. Your predecessors, the Puritan Pastors of New England, were strong in their sense of the new social order which was to come as the earthly realization of the Kingdom of God. They dreamed of a genuine theocracy, a civil order in which the reign of the divine Spirit would be complete. However imperfect, and even clumsy, modern criticism may deem some of their attempts to establish their social ideals, the real content of those ideals, the brave conception of an associated life which should embody and express the will and purpose of God for men, was possessed of high and lasting value. And it will add a hundred fold to your own usefulness as pastors, if you too, may, in the language of our day, hold aloft ideals which shall be equally commanding, and labor for their realization with the same splendid zeal." [1]

[1] Brown, "The Social Message of the Modern Pulpit," p. 32.

XVII

THE ETHICS OF PULPIT SPEECH

OUTLINE

The Effect of the Critical Spirit on Pulpit Speech.
The Relation of Ethics to Speech.
    The moral quality of words.
The Ethical Demand for Truthfulness to the Message.
    Reality of thought expressed in reality of speech.
    The vivid concept of truth.
    The fidelity to study and experience.
    Conscientious clearness of style.
    Bible truth in intelligible speech.
    Illustrations that reveal truth.
    Freedom from cant phrases of religion.
    Disuse of technical terms.
    Questions of style and the power of the pulpit.
The Ethical Demand for Truthfulness to the Person.
    Relation of the word to the preacher.
    True speech cannot be borrowed.
    The patchwork style and the patchwork sermon.
    Training and the personal style.
    The personal message in frankness and fulness.
    The right and wrong use of humor.
    The moral defect of the sensational pulpit.
The Ethical Demand for Practical Speech.
    The unselfish use of style.
    Plain but pure speech.
    A pure conscience and a pure taste.

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XVII

THE ETHICS OF PULPIT SPEECH

It was said of an eminent astronomer of our age that he had supreme regard for a fact. And in his scorn of theories, and the painstaking, persistent search for truth in his chosen sphere, he was no doubt a good expression of the age-spirit. A robust, fearless spirit it is, with too little reverence for the past, sometimes permitting the facts of the senses to hide the facts of the spirit; but asking the single question — What is truth? — willing to abide by it and confident of its victory. This spirit may be traced immediately to the influence of modern science; but the primary cause is the very Spirit of truth preparing again the way of the Lord in the hearts of men.

It has certainly left its healthful criticism upon speech, increasing the dignity, responsibility, and power of a word. It wants truth first and always, better perhaps to say *reality*, the word to stand for a reality of thought and feeling,

the man to speak just as he thinks and as he feels the truth. This is the ethical quality of pulpit speech, the exact correspondence between the outer form and the inner reality.

The age is rightly impatient of verbiage. The demand for short sermons is not altogether the sign of an unsanctified heart. Brevity is often synonymous with directness. And men will lose the limits of time now, as they have always done, under the charm of a living message. But they refuse to be satisfied with "words, words, words," when they ask for truth.

The critical spirit is the unwilling ally of the pulpit. We may well rejoice that it pricks the rhetorical windbag, that it humbles the empty vanities of style. It helps to separate the precious from the vile that the mouth may be more as the Lord's mouth. As far as words correspond to the truth, the man, and the needs of the human heart, have they the *moral* equality. The ethics of pulpit speech then demand that the speech be *truthful*, *personal*, and *practical*.

Reality, truthfulness, is the prime quality of ethical speech. It is the moral force of the pulpit as of all speech. Two college presidents were discussing before an audience of teachers certain conditions of college entrance. One used his subtle charm of speech to confuse the

issue, to puzzle the minds and postpone action. The other, from a thorough study of the questions and a strong conviction of the best way, spoke with a simple directness that revealed and convinced. The one was a politician, playing with words to win the game. The other was a truth-seeker and truth-speaker, making his words luminous with reality.

A real message, a living message, must find its voice in pulpit speech. Words must give the "measure, the quality, the power, and the life" of the truth they would teach. A sincere mind that reaches clear views of truth will always aim to speak the truth. Thought is the vital fashioner of style, crystalline and virile, or hazy and nerveless, as the thought is so.

Reality of thought then is the important question for any one who would be a spiritual teacher of men. How can the mind get a vivid concept of the message of Christ? Men say, Pray for the illumination of the Spirit, surrender fully and be filled with the Spirit, give up vain search and give yourselves to Christian duty, and you shall know. Each piece of advice, good and necessary as it is, by itself alone hardly meets the case; and is too often used as a cheap and easy substitute for that which requires an arduous and protracted mental and spiritual discipline. To know the truth of God demands

the strenuous exercise of the mental powers. No hasty skimming of books and papers, no dilettante idling over polite literature, will lodge God's thoughts in the mind in their vitalizing reality. We must work our way at whatever personal cost into the life of the writers of Scripture. The new exegesis is making the Bible a living book. It is the spirit of thoroughness that pushes every word to its roots and relations, compelling it to yield its utmost suggestiveness; it is the spirit of humility that is willing to subject every opinion to the white light of the Word; it is the spirit of a Pauline ambition, not counting itself to have attained, but ever, with unveiled face, welcoming truth from every source and expecting larger visions of truth. It is the spirit of loyalty "to every fact, to every teaching of the Word, to every lesson of providence, to every precept of the Spirit." Truth is not known, — it does not yet lie in the mind as a living reality, — until the will yields its glad assent, and the emotions thrill their response to the claim of its sovereignty and beauty.

It is one thing to know the divinity of our Lord as a theological dogma, to be able even to marshal in logical and forceful array the accepted argument for the doctrine. It is another and higher truth to have seen the glory of Christ

flash from the pages of the Word, or gleam in the holy place of prayer, and in that light to know the depth of need and the glory of life and out of that dual experience to gain the strength of faith. There was the deepest and strongest exercise of the entire spiritual man in the passionate cry of Charles Kingsley, "I cannot, I cannot live without the man Christ Jesus."

The man who forms his concepts of Divine truth through such mental and spiritual sincerity will carry his sensitiveness and honesty into every word that he uses in public teaching. He will have some sense of the imperfect medium of language — how that the most transparent words cannot tell all that is in a man's heart. And so nothing that can be removed will be suffered to dim the meaning of his thought. The man who has worked his own way to the meaning of truth understands some of the hindrances to its reception on the part of other men, their misconceptions, prejudices, dislikes, prepossessions — the whole environment of years of life that determine what a man shall see. And so the true preacher will try to find acceptable words, words that are the nearest kin to the hearers, that break through the crust of mental and spiritual habit and find the heart and conscience.

Bible phrases need often to be put into present speech. The "Twentieth Century New Testament" is an attempt in this direction. Some men think that the quoting of Scripture is laying the very power of the Spirit upon human hearts. So their speech is a Bible mosaic. Nothing is better than an apt use of Scripture. Such quotations as those of Alexander Maclaren of Manchester are sudden gleams of truth, or blows that clinch the argument, or strokes that lay open the very secrets of life. They are never inapt or commonplace; they are the work of a true exegete, who uses his critical knowledge to lighten or strengthen. But too many men use Scripture in a magical fashion, either out of reverence for the very language of inspiration or as a pious cloak for their mental poverty.

Bible words and phrases are often truer to the original tongues than to our own; they have something of an oriental atmosphere; they are colored by the life of a strange people. In so far as this is true, they may have the effect of a far-away message, even something of unreality. Therefore the thought of the Bible must be clothed in the speech of present life. And does not Bible language, from our very familiarity with it, sometimes fail to give distinct and vivid impression; fail to arrest the thought and stimulate interest and inquiry? The old truths need

to be poured into the moulds of present use. The life must find its way into forms nearest and quickest to the thought and sensibility of living men.

How many *illustrations* of the pulpit must be called darkeners, not revealers, of spiritual truth! They are ingenious rather than natural, artificial not striking, sensational, serving themselves more than the truth. Or the illustrations are so trite, — analogies of nature, stories of personal experience, extracts from homiletical handbooks, — that they are a threadbare texture, a faded drapery, or a window soiled and scratched and cracked by long and careless use.

A busy minister of a great church joined the class of a biological laboratory that he might get the new symbolism and illustrations by which so many men were newly expressing the facts of life. "If this ignominious tale be founded on fact," says Dr. Watson concerning the reported pepper-caster of illustrations with which some ministers flavor their sermons, "and be not a scandal of the enemy, then the Protestant Church ought also to have an Index Expurgatorius, and its central authorities insert therein books which it is inexpedient for ministers to possess. In this class should be included 'The Garland of Quotations' and 'The Reservoir of Illustrations,' and it might be well if the chief

of this important department should also give notice at fixed times that such and such anecdotes, having been worn threadbare, are now withdrawn from circulation. The cost of this office would be cheerfully defrayed by the laity."

This does not mean that the commonplace and familiar are to be avoided. The simplicity of illustration will depend largely on its familiarity. The man who is ever striving after the unusual violates the first law of simplicity, "much within and little without," and is not pure and true in his style. All of Christ's illustrations are of simple things, but He gave them immortal value by the high truth that He put into them.

To overdo illustration is ethically as bad as to use artificial ones. "Some sermons," says Dr. Garvie, "consist of very many big but often cheap beads of illustration and quotation, kept together by a very thin thread of thought, sometimes by little more than the repetition of the text. Sunsets and waterfalls and flowers and birds are not necessary to every sermon; still less should descriptions of scenery form the greater part of the sermon. A man who professes to be delivering a message which is either a savour of life unto life or of death unto death to his hearers should have neither the

time nor the taste for such elegant and superficial trifling. Preaching is not art or poetry, although it may use both. Admiration of nature in it should be swallowed up in adoration of God. The man in whom the Word of the Lord burns will never make merely a picture or a poem out of his sermon." [1]

The most unreal uses of speech by the pulpit are the cant phrases of religion. How the moral sense has been offended by the glib and trite use of such great phrases as "Coming to Jesus" and "Saving the Soul"! Expressions of this class rarely convey the great realities once connected with them. They have been so long, often thoughtlessly, used, that they have become loose and effusive terms of religious sentimentalism, meaning anything that the mind of the hearer may interpret. They lack definiteness and exactness and so truthfulness. They are not the symbols of clear thinking and so fail of clear impression. Truth is unchangeable; but from the nature of man there must be change, growth, in the conception of truth and so of its symbols. It is inevitable, then, that forms once types of the loftiest conceptions and charged with emotion should become so common as to lose their reality, — stereotyped and soulless forms, the cant speech of religion. There is a natural

[1] Garvie, "Guide to Preachers," p. 235.

impatience at words and phrases "exhausted by overuse." No form of words, however significant, is free from this law of change. We may be thankful that the revisers have taken one of these phrases out of our English Bible and given us a new form of words, adequate to the truth that religion is coterminous and synonymous with a man's whole life. "For what doth it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his life?"

And for the same reason reality demands the disuse of *technical terms of theology* in the pulpit. Some words the Gospel has created and these are necessary to accuracy and fulness of thought, and so must be retained in pulpit speech. But there are many others, not found in the Scriptures or rarely found, that are creations of theological and philosophical contests, having no vital connection with the Gospel and in no sense a present expression of it. John Foster well calls them "a kind of Popery of language, requiring everything to be marked with the signs of the holy church." There has been an improvement since Foster's day in the purity of pulpit English. There are more men now who are in the pulpit what they are out of it, and out of the pulpit what they are in it. But there is still the tendency to speak religious truth in a dialect which should be essentially

spiritual and so far unserviceable for any other subject. Such speech gives the Gospel the air of a professional thing, and so far is untrue to the measure and spirit of its message. When you begin to speak of the subjective and the objective, — you are not speaking to the popular mind. The mere technicalities of theology are for treatises of theology and for the study; but in the pulpit let the preacher deal with living men and women in words that are closest to their daily experience.

In his introduction to "Straight Sermons" or "Sermons to Young Men," Dr. Henry van Dyke voices the purpose of reality. "No thinking minister can stand up before a company largely composed of young men without a strong wish to be plain-spoken and to come straight to the point. They have a fine impatience of all mere formalities and roundabout modes of speech, which acts as a moral tonic to brace the mind from vagueness and cleanse the tongue from cant. They want a man to say what he means. The influence of this unspoken demand is wholesome and inspiring, and the preacher ought to show his gratitude for it by honestly endeavoring to meet it. For this reason I have tried to write these sermons not in a theological dialect, but in the English language."

This is not a factitious discussion of the

hindrances to reality of expression. Let the preacher fail of mental thoroughness, alertness, vividness, sensitiveness, and his speech will be made of the commonplaces of phrase, quotation, and illustration. Then let this verbal unreality be spoken with an unreal elocution (the two are almost inseparable, the expression of the same nature), the voice of a "holy tone," rising and falling in regular cadence, and the hearer may well say with Tennyson's "Northern Farmer":

"An' 'eärd um a bummin' awaäy loike a buzzard-clock ower my yeäd,
An' I niver knaw'd whot a meän'd but I thowt a 'ad summut to saäy,
An' I thowt a said whot a owt to 'a said, an' I coomed awaäy."

These questions of style are more than matters of taste and individuality. It is right to lift them into the sphere of ethics. They have to do with the influence of the pulpit and with a man's right to stand in the pulpit. Unreality of speech is dishonesty of speech. Old words lose their significance. The national mind grows. Epochs in life and theology give birth to new ideas. Language, too, must grow to express the larger life. The man who by mental indolence or the backward look fails to live in his generation cannot be God's voice to them.

Charles G. Finney did not speak a religious dialect. He threw away the terminology with which a false philosophy had hidden the truth, and spoke directly to the conscience and common sense of men in words and images present and real and so throbbing with the power of divine life.

The example of Mr. Finney naturally suggests the fact that preaching is in no sense an impersonal matter. Truth must not only have a reality in speech, — the words give, as far as it may be possible for words to give, "the measure, the spirit, and the power of the truth," — that truth must be through a *personality*. The *personal form* will be a vital part of its reality. The very philosophy of preaching demands this; there can be no true preaching without it. How is it that the highest power of a word is inseparable from its sound? "The Essays of Emerson," said Mr. Alcott, "were never truly understood until he had spoken them." There is life in the spoken word not found in the written. Through the spoken word does the speaker breathe his own life into the souls of his hearers. Therefore the man is inseparable from the message; his personal experience apprehends and colors it; his character illustrates and enforces it. The thinking, the emotions, the experiences, — *the life*, personal,

peculiar, individual, — must show itself in the speech of a living man.

Such speech cannot be *borrowed*. No language of others, however appropriate and beautiful, can satisfy the ethics of the true preacher. It is not simply the question of plagiarism in its ordinary sense, getting the credit that belongs to another; it is primarily the question of being true to one's self. The words of others are not truly your words. "The style is the man." You must speak your own message and not another's. The voice will not be Jacob's and the garments Esau's. Needless quotation is only vain pedantry. The marshalling of names and learned instances are marks of shallow scholarship. They are accretions and not growths. They cover the true man; they clog his utterance; they are alien to the conception of preaching. Authorities are to be cited and quotations used only to strengthen the position held or add needed light and splendor to the truth.

It must be remembered that the style will be a *patchwork* if the sermon is so constructed. The true sermon is a growth, not a manufacture. And the average audience feels the difference between the sermon that is the voice of the deepest life of the man and the one that is put together out of commentaries and handbooks

of illustration, to meet the Sunday's appointment. As teachers of the Gospel are we not under moral bonds to give the truth its most effective form? Are we not to form our habits of work so that the truth may have time to grow into vivid conceptions and quicken the emotions, — taking a deep hold of the entire mental and moral nature, — so that we shall speak, the entire man and not another, so that the sermon shall be a living word of God?

We must feel the need of the *best training*, and training that shall continue as long as life lasts, if the speech is to be ever personal and yet varying as the phases of truth and its application to the natures of men. Cultivation, familiar converse with great thinkers and the masters of English style, will not destroy individuality, but free it, lead it out into fuller and more facile exercise. Such minds must speak the message God gives in their own way. They cannot be imitators, and yet they are more versatile, more many-sided, in their style, fitted to the varying phases of truth, and individual in them all.

Here is where the man of narrow culture and small literary furnishing shows his limit. He keeps a rigid individuality in his speech, often more prominent than the truth expressed; or he uses the manner of others without the power

of assimilation, changing with the copy like the unformed hand of the schoolboy.

The preacher is called upon to speak the message of God in *confident frankness and fulness*. The true influence of the pulpit demands this. A reputation for undue reserve, for policy and expediency, is fatal to leadership. Men love to be trusted, and they open their hearts to the teacher who speaks directly and without disguise. It is true that half-formed ideas should be voiceless, that the "spectres of the mind" should be laid in silence, that though the range of teaching be greatly narrowed, its accent should be that of humble certitude. But there should be no timid withholding of the personal expression of the truth. Let every man give the best truth he has, in the best and fullest way he has. All ways of euphemistic circumlocution are essentially dishonest. If you wish to realize how a man who lacks truth in the inner part instinctively hides himself behind his speech, study Shakespeare's delineation of the King in "Hamlet." Few can resist the charm of the man who speaks with simple and honest directness, who gives himself in his speech with costly self-exhaustion. Such fountains are quickly filled again from the upper springs.

But is there no *limit* to this personal expression in speech? There certainly is, and not hard to

find. The moment that the personal element fails to exalt and impress the truth, that moment the limit of its rightful expression has been reached.

It is the *danger* of *humor* in the pulpit. In no sense is this a plea for any undue seriousness. The mock gravity "that merely hides with solemn front the lack of thought and feeling" is worthy of the satire it has received. But is it not time for the clerical jester to receive with the clerical prig the contempt he deserves? The man who has no sense of humor is to be pitied; he lacks the sense of proportion; he may lack richness of nature and gentleness and sensitiveness. It is a most helpful quality to the pulpit, keeping it from extravagance and bitterness. Laughter may not be wrong in the church. "There is a smile," to use the words of Bishop Brooks, "which sweeps across a great congregation like the breath of a May morning, making it fruitful for whatever good thing may be sowed in it, and another laughter that is like the crackling of thorns under a pot." But have we not seen the clerical jester lay his defiling touch upon the most sacred things? The most impressive occasion, the opportunity for the holiest influence, has been thrown away by the funny story or the inconvenient jest. Deliver the Church from the man who cannot control

and sanctify his humor! Does it make the pun any the less vicious for a famous clergyman to say that even Jonah had to be *whaled* to take the path of duty? The trouble with the funny man in the pulpit, the clerical jester, is that the wit is an end, not a means. It is indulged and enjoyed as a play, and not kept conducive to the softening and winning of the heart. It is an undue expression of personal taste and eccentric display, and not the natural expression of a consecrated manhood. And in this spirit humor in pulpit speech becomes essentially immoral.

And the same charge can be drawn against the *sensational pulpit* and for the same reason. The evil of sensationalism is in the undue expression of the man; it puts the man before the message. It has been wittily said that the difference between an advertiser and a sensational preacher was that the first advertised his wares and the second advertised himself. It may fill the church and trumpet the preacher's name by the lips of thousands, but that may not work for righteousness and establish the kingdom of spiritual life. "You may lose your fortune and gain another; you may lose your wife and win another; but if you lose your soul, good-by, John," was the way a certain noted preacher of our day tried to express the value of the soul.

It certainly made a sensation. But did it open the heavens and let light upon the immortal nature of man? It did not make a silence in the soul for God to speak. People thought it a smart saying, and enjoyed the audacity of it, as they would the keen and not too reverent wit of *Life* or any well-known society paper.

No doubt we have too much conservative dulness. We must catch the ears of the people. The pulpit must add vivacity to spirituality. But is there any message of God, any word for the restless, unsatisfied heart of humanity, in "Yea, and its Variation," "Gnawed Mangers," "Impossible Balloons," and "The Willing Hat"? The truth is, such expressions are never suggestive and attractive forms of truth, too often but the voice of a vain and shallow nature. A flippant sensationalism can only deaden the true hunger of the soul, dissipate earnest thought by its irreverence, and in the end prove a feeble rival to the comic opera and the variety theatre.

The *personal element* in pulpit speech must be true to a sincere, reverent, consecrated manhood. Such personality God's word seeks for its expression.

The ethics of pulpit speech go beyond the message and the preacher; they demand of words more than the setting forth of a reality and a personality. The personal knowledge of

divine truth must be so spoken that men shall catch the preacher's vision and feel the preacher's passion. The bond of a common experience, a common sympathy, must be felt in the words. The audience must ever be in the mind of the preacher. The speech must be *practical*.

Some preachers seem more anxious for the salvation of the sermon than for the salvation of the hearer. The sermon at times has the air of the study, the flavor of philosophy, poetry, history, the favorite literature. It may satisfy the æsthetic sense, but is not spoken in the language that men use in practical matters. Style is a relative matter; but the need of the audience must be consulted as well as the literary taste and ideal of the speaker. There is far more preaching over the heads of the audience than men suppose. It is true that the people should be made to think, the sermons cannot be too thoughtful; the pulpit should be rescued from the weakness of sentimentalism by virile, intellectual preaching; but the greatest truths can be clothed in ways intelligible to common men, and this the very purpose of preaching demands. And this should be done even at the cost of some cherished literary ideals. A literary style in the pulpit, born of the study and not of the daily walks of men, is cold and exclusive; it is defective morally, it shows a

lack of moral intensity, it does not pulse with the love that strives to save. You will find this entry in the diary of Dr. Chalmers: "I feel that I do not come close enough to the heart and the experience of my people. I begin to think that the phraseology of the old writers must be given up for one more accommodated to the present age." And Thomas Arnold has given us a true hint when he says in a preface to a volume of sermons, — "I have tried to write in such a style as might be used in real life, in serious conversation with our friends." The preacher is more than an artist, delighting in self-expression. The art-view of the sermon is fitted to the club-view of the Church: "A very pleasant song of one that hath a pleasant voice." It does not break the bonds of the oppressor, or melt cold hearts into Godward emotion. The finest culture, the most finished style, may be nothing compared to the simple, rough speech inspired of the Spirit and voicing great thoughts.

Plain, direct speech, intelligible to men, may come, ought to come, from the pure wells of English undefiled. If it is not pure speech, it cannot be moral in the highest sense. How can we degrade our sacred tongue by slang and vulgar colloquialism in the pulpit! How can we defile its crystal streams with the foul waters of careless speech! Let us never speak half the

language of Ashdod and half of Canaan, but be of pure English lip.

The sermon should be the speech of life, but worthy of the message of life and the souls of men. Wendell Phillips described speaking as "animated conversation," and only the added word *dignified* is needed for preaching. The Gospel cannot be helped by slang and the slovenly language of the street. Yellow journalism is not moralized by adoption in the pulpit. Even the man of the street will not respect such language from the advocate of the new life. It is a familiarity that argues contempt and surely breeds it. It is essentially unethical; it does not adorn the doctrine of Christ.

If we reverence the message Christ has given us, reverence the souls of men committed to our charge, reverence ourselves, — earthen vessels, but intrusted with the heavenly treasure, — then we shall be kept from all pomposity and vulgarity and have that earnest simplicity of speech that shall make our preaching a living word of God.

And in seeking *simplicity* of pulpit speech for the sake of reaching men, it must not be forgotten that it is the element of strength, and as Mr. Charles Dudley Warner has finely said, the element of immortality in literature. It goes beneath the surface of style and takes hold of

the grace of humility. The art of preaching, like all other true arts, is simple and chaste. "To be much within and little without, to do all for truth, nothing for show, and to express the largest possible meaning with the least possible stress of expression, — this is its law."

It will help us to build after the "pattern in the Mount," if we make a lifelong study of words, words in the best books and words in the daily intercourse with men; if we make a lifelong study of style, the expression of the finest literature and the methods of common men. Then we must diligently keep out of the ruts of theological thought and speech, not only by the spirit that takes us into the haunts of men, but into other fields of study aërating the mind and giving fresh forms of thought. As has already been suggested, conscience has something to do with taste. Speech has its best promise and safeguard in the growth of the spiritual life. A pure conscience will coincide with a pure taste. Then the "yea of the tongue will express the full and mighty affirmative of the entire man, nothing more, nothing less; then the spoken nay will utter the absolute, emphatic protest of mind, heart, and conscience, nothing more, nothing less; then the voice of man sounds forth as the very trumpet of God."

INDEX

A

Abbott, Lyman, definition of authority, 166; the social instruction of the pulpit, 343.
Acts iv., Expository plan, 296.
Age, religious thought and life of the, 102; the message of the, 191.
Alger, G. W., failure of law to recognize new social relations, 336.
Amos, a list of sermon topics on, 107.
Apologetics, definition of, 317; examples of, 317; urgent need of, 319.
Apologist, how shall the preacher do the work of the, 320; Canon Liddon as an, 323.
Asceticism, and the spiritual life, 117.
Atonement, place of the, in preaching, 227; four elements of the, to be preached, 229.
Augustine, the message of, 198.
Authority, definition of, 166; relation of, to experience, 182; relation between inner and outer, 186.

B

Balaam, Robertson's portrait of, 333.
Beecher, Henry Ward, the satire of, 128; health and work, 46; relation of health to spiritual vision, 49; on the "thrust power" of the voice, 53; variety of topics in expository preaching, 291.
Bible, systematic knowledge of, 100; devotional study of, 146.
Boynton, Dr. Nehemiah, suggestions as to books and reading, 103.
Brooks, Phillips, suggestions on method, 108; the message of, 199; on the value of the soul, 277; on expository preaching, 303.
Brown, Charles R., concerning the housing of workingmen, 243; the minister as a social teacher, 347.
Brown, Dr. John, quotation from "Spare Hours," 60.
Browning, Robert, quotation from Prologue to Asolando, 36.

C

Chalmers, Thomas, the secularizing influence of routine, 140.
Channing, William E., denial of the physical life, 43; the message of, 199.

Cheerfulness and gravity, elements of a spiritual preacher, 129.
Christ, the personal method of, 8; relation of, to the Bible, 195; to nature and life, 196.
Church, Dean, cultivation of the spiritual life, 146.
Clement, the message of, 198.
Coe, Geo. A., religious states and the nervous system, 48; effect of joy on the physical life, 52.
Courage, the necessary quality of the preacher, 16.
Culture, scholarly, relation of, to character, 71; and sincerity, 71; and humility, 74; and balance, 75; relation of, to preaching, 77; to the ideal of the sermon, 77; and the instructive sermon, 79; the choice of subjects, 80; the growth of the sermon, 81; the style of the sermon, 82.

D

Dale, R. W., preaching and the religious affections, 141; the truth of the Living Christ, 197; definition of expository preaching, 285.
Doctrine, present tendency to ignore, 307; the difficulty of teaching, 309; the loss of, in preaching, 311; the preaching of, essential, 312; what should mark the preaching of, 313.
Dykes, Dr. J. Oswald, the union of the personal and social message, 241.

E

Earnestness, moral, the necessary quality of the preacher, 15.
Ethics, the effect of reducing the Gospel to, 327; the place of, in the New Testament, 329; present demand for the preaching of, 330; what shall be the preaching of, 331; the biographical sermon and the teaching of, 332; methods for the pulpit teaching of, 343; the true spirit for the teaching of, 345.
Evangelism, the truths to be preached in, 268; weakness of a passing, 271.
Evangelist, the preacher as an, 264; office of the, 271.
Experience, and the authority of the message, 179.

F

Faith, sincere, the necessary quality of the preacher, 14; its place in the Gospel message, 231.
Father, the righteous, the revelation of Christ, 215.
Fear, the appeal to, in preaching, 275.
Feeling, the wrong emphasis upon, 218.
Finney, Charles G., style of, 363.
Foss, Bishop, on the preaching needed, 79.

G

Garvie, A. E., the evil of too many illustrations in preaching, 358.

Gilder, R. A., "The Song of a Heathen," 14.
God, the righteous, the revelation of the Old Testament, 214.
God, the person and presence of, best taught through Christ, 224.

H

Harrison, Frederic, on the power of Christianity for the social life, 252.
Hawthorne, Nathaniel, relation of the heart to reality of thought, 33; true method of appeal, 302.
Health, natural leadership of, 48; relation to personal influence, 46; the attraction of, 47; and sane teaching, 48; and the best work, 51.
Hodge, Dr. Caspar, the spirit of humanity, 75.
Hopefulness, a necessary quality of the preacher, 17.
Hoppin, the influence of culture on the preacher, 77.
Humility, the quality of a spiritual preacher, 127.
Humor, the good and evil of, in the pulpit, 367.
Huntington, Bishop F. D., on unselfishness in the ministry, 125.

I

Ideal, a growing ethical, 335.
Illustrations, the wrong use of, 357.
Ingelow, Jean, quotation from "Brothers and a Sermon," 34.
Intellectual work, breadth of, demanded of the pulpit, 70.
Isaiah xxxv. 3–10, Expository plan, 357.

J

Jefferson, Charles E., the physical strain of public speaking, 54.
John xvi. 12–15, Expository plan, 297.
Johnson, E. H., power of meditation, 149; Christian labor and the highest life, 152.

K

King, "Rational Living," breadth of interests and influence, 34, 84; effect of insights unobeyed, 140.
Kingdom, Christ's teaching concerning the, 254.
Kingsley, Charles, the sacredness of the earth and human life, 119; quotation from the "Wild Fowl," 133; description of the preaching of Augustine, 181.
Kipling, quotation from, 160.

L

Life, the aim of the Gospel message, 210; Christ's portrait of in the Beatitudes, 216.
Life, Higher, doctrine of, 155.
Life, the future, not the emphasis of the Gospel message, 218.
Life, eternal, Christ's teaching of, 219.
Liturgy and the Message, 192.

Love, John's definition of life, 212.
Luther, the message of, 199.

M

Mabie, H. W., the character of meditation, 151.
Maclaren, Alexander, the plans of, 299.
Man, the full truth of, best taught by Jesus, 225.
Mathews, Prof. Shailer, on the social teaching of the Church, 256.
Matthew v. 1–12, xiii. 1–9, viii. 5–13, Expository plans, 294–5.
Maurice, F. D., the danger of playing with words, 142.
Mazzini, Joseph, on the authority of Jesus as a social teacher, 252.
McConnell, Dr. S. D., the temper of the age, 194.
McGlynn, Dr., concerning mission preaching, 268.
Message, simplicity of the, in Christ, 200; comprehensiveness of the, 201, 203; the social, of the Old Testament, 248; of the New Testament, 250.
Messenger, use of, in New Testament, 8.
Method, need of, for the minister's growth, 92; a hindrance to, in the minister's peculiar circumstances, 93; power gained by, 96; moral elevation of, 98; danger of, 99; subjects to be covered by, 200; in the study, a help to method in teaching, 104; expository, suggestions as to, 299.
Mill, John Stuart, comparison of Christian ethics with pagan, 252.
Milman, Dean, method of, 98.
Monasticism, and its influence on the physical life, 42.
Moore, Dr. Geo. F., on the larger interpretation of Scripture, 101.
Motives, the appeal to, in preaching, 262.
Mysticism, and the spiritual life, 114; the danger and weakness of, 115.

N

Nicoll, Dr. Robertson, the work of untutored men, 67.

O

Organization and the message, 191.

P

Parkhurst, Charles H., on habit in prayer, 148.
Passion, a new ethical, 340.
Patience, the quality of a spiritual preacher, 132.
Penalty, escape from, a partial Gospel message, 216.
Perfection, the doctrine of sinless, 155.
Person, the Gospel of a, and the need of our age, 209.
Personality, special value of, in preaching, 4; importance of, shown in the history of preaching, 11; the nature of, 27; the limitation of, 24; Christian faith implies the growth of, 28; to be enriched in spiritual wisdom, 29; in human sympathy, 32.

Peters, Dr. C. H. F., a story of the stars, 134.
Phelps, Austin, true theory of ministerial culture, 85; the mission of comfort, 50.
Philippians, a list of sermon topics on, 107.
Pietism and the spiritual life, 116.
Plagiarism, the ethics of, 364.
Play, the law of, in the physical life, 58.
Powers, Hiram, story of, 36.
Prayer, habit of daily, 147.
Preaching, reason for the perpetuity of, 5; positive and constructive, 235; two views of, 263; what is expository, 285.
Prophets, the nature of their teaching, 170; the modern, and their message, 198; social message of the, 250.

R

Rainsford, W. S., the preacher for the times, 19.
Rauschenbusch, Prof. Walter, on the "New Evangelism," 342.
Reality, the prime quality of ethical speech, 352; the mental and spiritual conditions for, 353; relation of Bible quotations to, 356.
Reconciliation, Paul's expression of the Gospel message, 212.
Religion, cant phrases of, 359.
Resurrection, place of the, in preaching, 234.
Righteousness, the Old Testament word for life, 214.
Robertson, F. W., comment on Elijah's dejection, 45.

S

Salvation, definition of, 239; two views of, 263.
Saul, Phillips Brooks' realistic picture of, 334.
Scotchmen, influence of, and an educated pulpit, 68.
Sensationalism, the evil of, in the pulpit, 368.
Sensibility, spiritual, 138; the dulling of, 139; concerning sin, 143.
Sermons, expository, the need of, 283; objections to, 283; two features of, 286; advantages of, 287.
Sheppard, Ambrose, the social conditions of the city, 242.
Simeon, Charles, words concerning exercise, 41.
Simplicity, the highest art of pulpit speech, 372.
Simpson, Bishop, on the succession of noble preachers, 13.
Sin, a more present interpretation of, 269.
Sincerity, the quality of a spiritual preacher, 122.
Spenser, Edmund, quotation from the "Faerie Queene," 16.
Spirit, The Holy, for power, 156; as a part of the Gospel message, 233.
Spirituality, a definition of, 120; influence of, 159.
Stalker, Dr. James, pursuit of special studies, 80.
Style, personal element in, 363; influence of a disciplined, 365; limit to the personal elements of, 366; relation of conscience to, 373; the moral purpose in, 370.
Sympathy, a necessary quality of the preacher, 16.

Swing, David, concerning faith in men, 131.

T

Taylor, Dr. A. M., the variety of motives that bring men to Christ, 273; definition of expository preaching, 285; the rich materials through expository preaching, 292.
Teacher, the preacher as a, 281.
Tennyson, Alfred, quotation from "The Poet," 173; "The Northern Farmer," 362.
Theology, technical terms of, in the pulpit, 360.
Trollope, Anthony, the method of, 97.
Truth, use of, in the Gospel of John, 7.
Tucker, Pres. W. J., the unmaking process in the preacher, 96.

U

Unselfishness, the quality of a spiritual preacher, 123.

V

Van Dyke, Dr. Henry, simplicity in pulpit speech, 361.

W

Ward, Mrs. Elizabeth Phelps, temptations to vanity in the preacher, 127.
Warner, Mr. Charles Dudley, the extent of the minister's work, 89.
Watson, Dr. John, quotation from Kate Carnegie, 152; the use of handbooks of illustration, 357.
Wesley, John, the demand upon the preacher, 90; the message of, 199; on Gospel sermons, 204.
Williams, Bishop C. D., the "disintegrated conscience," 337.
Witness, use of, in the New Testament, 10.
Wordsworth, William, "The Tables Turned," 59.
Worldliness, Robertson's definition of, 213.

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